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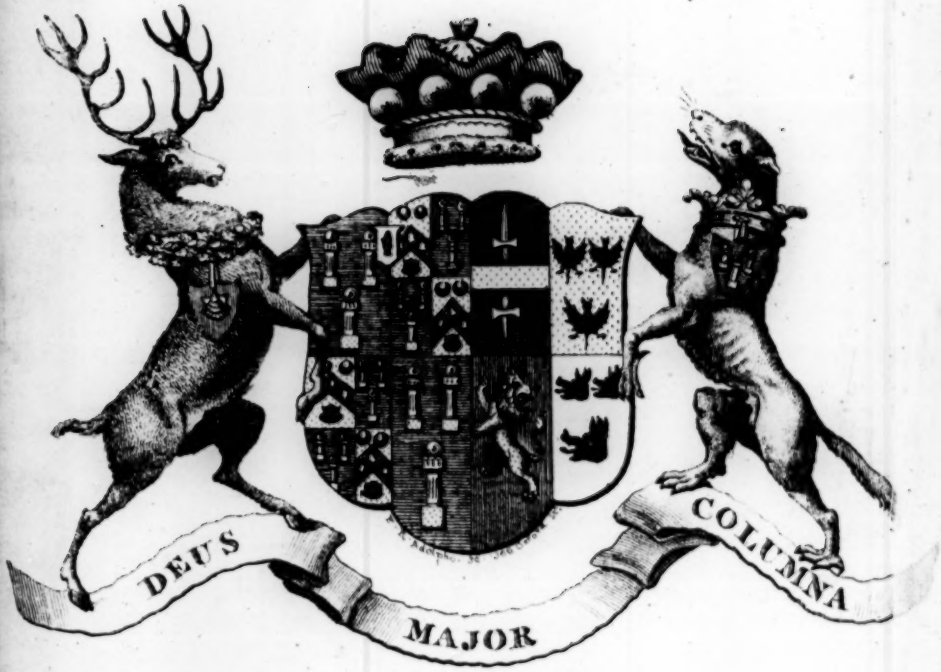

JOHN second LORD HENNIKER.
1804

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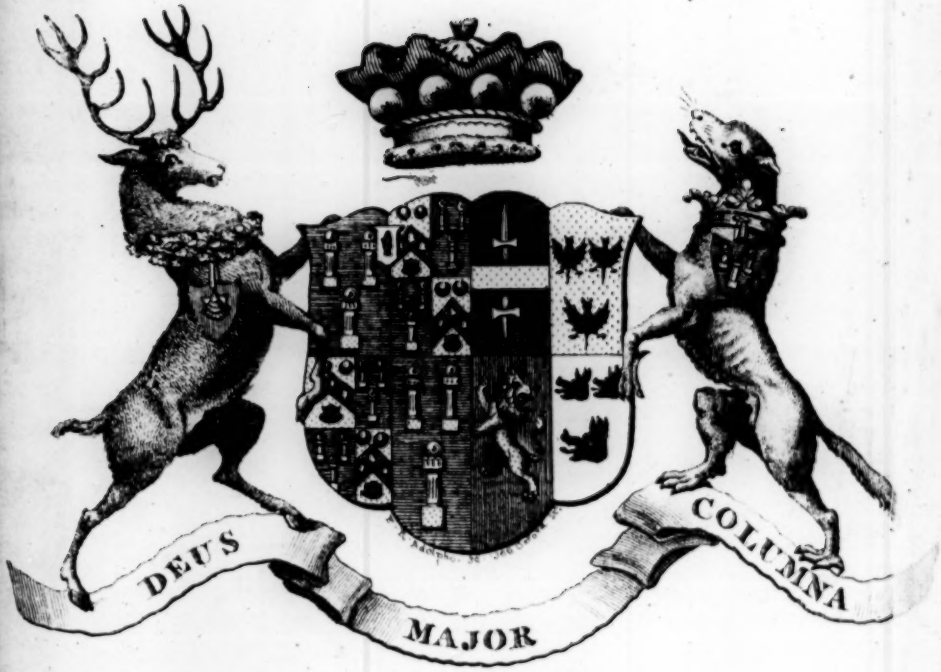

JOHN second LORD HENNIKER.
1804

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THE

SELF-TORMENTOR,

A

NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

" Lovers and Madmen have ſuch ſeething Brains,
" Such ſhaping Fantaſies, that apprehend
" More than cool Reaſon ever comprehends."

SHAKESPEARE.

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M DCC LXXXIX.

THE SELF-TORMENTOR.

LETTER I.

Lady Auguſta Finleigh *to Lady* Carlton.

St. James's Square.

O THAT pining diſeaſe would canker the roſe which again blooms on that Emmeline's cheek; for with her odious ſimplicity, Harriet, ſhe has effected what neither you nor I could, with all the ſplendour of our beauty, and all the charms of our wit—She has completed her conqueſt over Courtland.—But let them beware,—proud minds do not eaſily forgive neglect; and they may yet feel my vengeance, without perceiving whence the blow comes.

Nothing but their approaching marriage was talked of when I left the country. Courtland is in town; I ſup-

poſe, to haſten matters preparatory to his nuptials. I met him this morning in the Park, and more irreſiſtibly handſome than ever ancient bard depictured the Trojan boy whoſe gallantry provoked the Grecian ſpouſes to ſeek juſt vengeance on him.

He accoſted me with his uſual familiarity.——I wiſhed him joy on the approaching event.—He ſaid, he felt himſelf greatly flattered by my congratulations.

I replied, I was glad I could ſay any thing on which he had politeneſs enough to paſs a favourable conſtruction.

It was in every body's power, he ſaid, to confer a kindneſs on him, who expreſſed themſelves intereſted in his approaching happineſs—" And that you, Lady Auguſta," continued he, " ſhould graciouſly condeſcend——"

" Don't flatter me, Courtland; you will ever be the ſame provoking mortal. And you are really going to be married then?"

" Why, Madam, if one lady refuſes me, there is no reaſon I ſhould die a batchelor; and it is abſolutely neceſſary that I ſhould take a wife, if it were but to teach me the firſt rudiments of diſcretion; for hitherto my conduct has been

been extremely eccentric. Now, under the direction of a wife——"

"Wife!—Wife!" interrupted I.—"Let me, Courtland, never hear that word again from your lips: it ſounds ſo like inſult—after what has paſſed."

"Inſult! Lady Auguſta. Surely you miſconceive me. I only meant——"

"Well, no matter," interrupted I; "you will be always the ſame odious wretch.—But" (to turn the converſation) "do you know when the new comedy comes out?" I wiſhed to engage him of my party.

"Does your ladyſhip intend going?"

"To be ſure I do. Shall you not be there?"

"I ſhall not, Madam. Fictitious ſcenes of lovers can have no influence on a boſom which has taſted the dear delights of a real paſſion."

So ſaying, he ſtepped to his chariot, which was waiting for him at the Horſe-guards.

Ah! Harriet, I fear Sir Charles Willoughby is gaining a footing in your affections, which can neither be conſiſtent with your huſband's honour or your own.—Conſider, that whilſt we preſerve our chaſtity, the rod of power is ſtill in

our own, hands: but when once given up, we become the ſlaves of thoſe very tyrants for whom we ſacrificed it.——— Adieu.

A. FINLEIGH.

LETTER II.

H. Courtland, *Eſq*; *to Miſs* Ackworth.

Great Ormond Street.

I WANT reſolution to chide my deareſt Emmeline, though ſhe certainly deſerves reproof; for, ought ſhe who writes ſo liberally to her friends, grudge a few extraordinary lines to her lover?

How ſlowly do the dear interpreters of your thoughts reach my hands!—My fond impatience but ill brooks diſappointment. Now, conſider, my beſt love, that life affords me no ſatisfaction wherein you partake not. You are the charming ſource whence flow all my delights! —If the ſtream then be diverted into other channels, I am deprived at once of my tendereſt hopes!

In

In the centre of the gay world, I live in ſolitude. My paradiſe is not to be found in the empire of faſhion, or in the prattle of drawing-rooms. No—my Emmeline carries it in her heart; and moſt devoutly do I long to aſk it at her hands.

Deprived of the dear domeſtic bleſſings I ſo lately enjoyed, I ſit down to my ſolitary meals, oppreſſed by languor and melancholy. I lay open your letters before me—I read them again and again—This cheers my ſpirits, by a confirmation of your health—And this throws me into an inconceivable dejection, becauſe I fancy I trace a tender anxiety through every line, and that you have ſorrows in your boſom which you want the reſolution to impart, leſt you ſhould alarm my love—And when you expreſs yourſelf with your wonted gaiety, I cannot help exclaiming, "Does my Emmeline want ſenſibility, that ſhe can enjoy a pleaſure I ſhare not with her?" Then I reprove myſelf for having permitted ſo ungenerous a thought to obtrude on my mind; and then I think over the ten thouſand tender ſatisfactions I have felt whilſt my Emmeline was giving me ſome new proof of the ſincerity of her affection.

As you have entire influence over my father, let me conjure you to exert it all

in my behalf; and when you prefer my petition, put on one of your moſt captivating ſmiles (which I ſhould grudge to any other man breathing), and tell him how tardily the minutes creep which divide a lover from his wiſhes: urge him to revoke the rigour of his ſentence; and convince him, that, to him who doats as I do, an eternity ſtands between the middle of November and the month of March; before which he ſeems to think my hated rival cannot appear; entreat him, that when I viſit Roſelands next, he will ſanctify *my* love, by granting me *his* Emmeline.

Write to me immediately. Tell me your mediation is ſucceſsful, that I may ſhew myſelf the moſt obliged, as well as the moſt grateful, of men.

If my Emmeline loved me with that ſincerity I do her, could ſhe put ſuch reſtraints on her pen when writing to me? Would ſhe not unfold to her Courtland all the tender anxieties of her mind? —all thoſe delicate weakneſſes which a ſoul gentle as her's muſt ever feel?— Yes, ſpight of your bluſhes, I would have them all collected within the ſacred repoſitory of my own boſom; for, as I love you with the moſt unbounded ſincerity, ſo would I be loved in return.

Can

Can my Emmeline ever ſacrifice her Courtland to the entreaties of her father's friend?—No, I will not injure her tenderneſs, even to ſuppoſe it can admit of a doubt. But where the hopes are great, fears will intrude.——Adieu, my beſt love; and believe me ever your's moſt faithfully and affectionately,

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER III.

H. Courtland, *Eſq*; *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq*.

Great Ormond Street.

THERE is a meanneſs, my dear George, in diſingenuouſneſs, which will ſooner or later expoſe him who is guilty of it to the contempt of men of nice honour. Forgive me for the only part of my conduct which I never yet laid open to your inſpection, in conſequence of the diſtreſs of mind in which it is likely to involve me.

As you value my future friendſhip, let the ſubject of what follows be kept an inviolable ſecret from my family; for,

to wound the tender heart of my Emmeline by the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion, would make me unable to ſurmount my preſent embarraſſment.

To my tale then.——My former letters acquainted you that I ſpent more than two years viſiting foreign countries; where I ſtudied more the gallantry of courts than the national manners.—On returning to Paris, which generally gives the laſt finiſh to the travelled coxcomb, I always found myſelf a welcome gueſt at the houſe of an officer belonging to the King's guards, of the name of Gerard. He was well deſcended; but his fortune was extremely narrow; yet he made a very faſhionable appearance.—The beauty of the charming Vilette, his only daughter, drew men of the firſt diſtinction to his houſe. She was ſuperior to all the low arts of which handſome women avail themſelves, to attract the notice of men. Though all the world profeſſed themſelves her admirers, yet ſhe declared in favour of none; and ſhe accompanied her refuſal of them with a manner at once ſo graceful and reſpectful, that it added freſh celebrity to her name; and each rejected lover now became zealous to obtain her friendſhip.

I felt

I felt all that ſelf-importance ſo natural to my time of life—at being added to the number of her ſuite. I never thought of her in the character of a wife; and her conduct, though a French woman, was too chaſtened for any man ever to look on her in the light of a miſtreſs.—However, it became the general opinion that I ſtood a fairer chance for gaining her favour than the reſt of her followers.—My ambition was highly flattered by ſuch a report; and frequent opportunities of ſeeing her ſoon convinced me of it. My heart was untouched by her; but my vanity was highly gratified.

I was very young: I believe not more than two-and-twenty. She muſt have been five or ſix years my ſenior.

Conſcious that I poſſeſſed a place in her affections beyond what any of my rivals could boaſt, though I treated her with every poſſible mark of diſtinction, yet I never once thought of ſoliciting her hand; for the idea of a wife had never for a moment ſeriouſly taken poſſeſſion of my mind.—Her father, at length, with a becoming ſpirit, forbade my viſiting his daughter any more. But though his houſe was not open to me as uſual, yet every public place brought before me my charming Vilette, who, I found to

my ſorrow, loved me with the tendereſt paſſion.

My ſituation now became very critical; for a heart was offered me which I knew matrimony alone could purchaſe: and how could I refuſe to poſſeſs what I had apparently ſought with ſo much ardour to gain? Beſides, a thouſand other gay viſions now dazzled my ſenſes, ſince opportunity ſeldom indulged me with a tête-à-tête with the beautiful Vilette.

Piqued, I ſuppoſe, at my coldneſs, ſhe haſtily withdrew her correſpondence from me. I took umbrage at it; and would not ſolicit for a continuance, as I flattered myſelf that ſhe expected I would, leaving the reſult to chance, though I ſincerely longed for an interview with her.

One morning, as I was drinking my coffee, I received a letter from a perſon, requeſting I would attend the bearer to a milliner's ſhop.

At the proſpect of a new amour, I hurried away immediately. I was conducted into a room where the light was ſcarcely viſible: a lady ſoon after entered veiled, who, on ſeeing me, burſt into tears. It was Mademoiſelle Gerard.—I tenderly inquired what had happened to afflict her thus?

" The

"The heavieſt of all afflictions!" cried ſhe. "My cruel father is determined to give my hand to the old Marquis of Beaulieu.——O! Courtland, if you can deviſe a means to ſnatch me from his deteſted embraces, let me not be ſacrificed for gold! for I have a heart capable of love."

I now ſaw my folly in its moſt glaring light; and the frantic grief of this unhappy creature raiſed ſuch a conflict of ſoft emotions in my boſom, that I began to need the conſolation which ſhe came to aſk of me.

By every tender argument I could ſuggeſt, I entreated her not to marry, and to deviſe every poſſible means to delay it. I told her alſo that my own ſituation was extremely embarraſſed—that I had a father———

"A much ſhorter ſpeech," added ſhe, riſing indignantly, "would have convinced me of the contempt in which you hold me. By this appointment I feel myſelf ſo greatly humbled in my own eyes, that I can never expect again to be of any importance in your's. Forget me, Courtland, for ever: but do not let me be remembered with reproach!—My heart is very proud——"

She was going; but I detained her hand, and, on my knees, preſſed it to my boſom, again entreating her to find means to protract this hated marriage; and I was juſt on the point of yielding my liberty a captive to her tears, when her father entered the room. He ſpoke not; but, looking ſternly on his daughter and me by turns, led her out of the room.

A thouſand tender inquietudes now ruſhed on my mind. I felt all that ſuch a charming woman had to ſuffer for my ſake. I wrote to her, and incloſed a *carte blanche*, to which I ſigned my name, promiſing to abide by whatever conditions ſhe would propoſe to me.

I remained in the utmoſt ſuſpenſe for her anſwer. A month afterwards, the underwritten was deliver me by a perſon unknown:

"YOUR letter arrived too late. Already made deſperate by your unkindneſs, I had given my hand to the Marquis of Beaulieu!—Sighs and tears were the only companions of my bridal hours!——Write to me no more.—I have been imprudent; but the world ſhall never have reaſon to call me criminal!———I dare not ſign any other name but that of the unfortunate VILETTE."

Had

Had I not known that ſhe was unhappy, I ſhould ſoon have conſoled myſelf at her marriage. But the ſad idea frequently recurring to my boſom, cauſed it many a pang!

She left Paris immediately on her marriage, retired with the Marquis into a very remote province, and I never received the leaſt intelligence of her till———

But the ſubject muſt be reſerved for another letter. Therefore I can only add, the ſcandal of the day is, that Lady Carlton has eloped from her huſband with Sir Charles Willoughby.——— Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER IV.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

NOT to imitate a diſpoſition as replete with every ſpecies of malevolence as Lady Auguſta Finleigh's, a few nights ago I dropped in for half an hour to her aſſembly, for which I had previouſly received a card. The circle was brilliant and

and crowded. I was chatting with a very pretty woman, a Miſs Herbert, one of Lady Auguſta's moſt intimate friends, when we were interrupted by a faint ſcream. Concluding that ſome one of the company was taken ill, I turned round to ſee from whence it came; when I ſaw a lady ſunk in a fainting fit upon the ſhoulder of the perſon who ſat next her. I caught her in my arms, and carried her into another room, where ſhe might breathe the air more freely. Lady Auguſta and her woman attended: I was going to retire, when the lady, beginning to revive, opened her eyes. But, good God! what was my aſtoniſhment to recognize in her the Marchioneſs of Beaulieu!——The emotions of her ſoul on ſeeing me, ſhook her frame almoſt to diſſolution!

I ſtood ſpeechleſs with ſurpriſe, whilſt ſhe conjured Lady Auguſta to aſk me, if I had loſt all recollection of the unfortunate Vilette?

I ſaid, it was a name which I hoped I ſhould always remember with pleaſure.

At this ſhe ſeemed to brighten up; and I gueſſed, by the ſable colour of her dreſs, that I might ſpare myſelf the trouble of making any future inquiries after

after her lord; which proved to be the caſe.

As ſoon as I could with decency, I offered to attend her to the company. But this ſhe declined; when Lady Auguſta, in order to mortify me, ſaid, it would be much more gallant if I were to offer to attend the Marchioneſs home.

I ſaid, it was an honour of which I ſhould avail myſelf with pleaſure.——I led her to her carriage, which ſet us down in Berkeley-ſquare. I converſed with her on general ſubjects; and aſked her how long ſhe had been in England?

"Only a few weeks," ſhe added; "and in that time have been ſo ill as to have ſeen but little company before the preſent evening."

As I led her to the drawing-room, I was in ſome doubt how I ſhould conduct myſelf.

We were no ſooner ſeated than, in a burſt of grief, ſhe aſked me if I were married?

I anſwered in the negative.

"Then tell me," ſaid ſhe, "if I am an unwelcome gueſt in England?"

To which I ſaid, I ſhould be proud to return thoſe civilities which I received from her in France.

"And

"And is that all?" ſaid ſhe, ſhaking her head. "I will not be a burthen on you, Sir, for your *civilities*—I am too proud to aſk favours, though I am greatly humbled in ſpirit.——When laſt we parted, Courtland," added ſhe, "I was without rank—without fortune. I now poſſeſs them both.—But of what avail are they to a boſom devoured by its ſorrows?——The Marquis is no more!—In the midſt of a ſplendid marriage, I was the victim of conſuming grief!—Yet the attention I diſcovered for my huſband, never once led him to reproach me; and by the diſpoſition of his fortune, which was entirely in my favour, he could never have ſuſpected that my heart went not with my duty.—But the hated addreſſes of a Monſieur Marſin, who would have inherited the Marquis's fortune had he died unmarried, drove me from my caſtle in Provence, and made France become a dangerous reſidence to me. And therefore, attended by your old acquaintance Mademoiſelle Linon, I came hither—if not to find happineſs—at leaſt to eſcape from danger!"—She ſighed.

As it grew late, I adviſed her to retire, ſaying, I would do myſelf the honour

nour of paying my reſpects to her as ſoon as ſhe was viſible the next day.

Without waiting her reply, I bowed, and withdrew.

What a deal have I written, and not one word of my ſweet—my gentle Emmeline.———Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER V.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

I FULFILLED my appointment with the Marchioneſs the next morning.—Her looks were much diſturbed. I dreaded a ſtorm would ſoon burſt; and for a time warded it off, by offering to attend her to the public places.

" My heart is but ill diſpoſed to enjoy pleaſures," returned ſhe, " whilſt it is devoured by its anguiſh. But I muſt teach it to ſuffer alone, ſince I want a friend to ſhare its ſorrows with me.——Neceſſity, Courtland," ſaid ſhe, " gives the mind opportunities of exertion, of which it never thought itſelf capable in its

its days of proſperity: yet, cheated by hope, I am ſtill encouraged to proceed." ——(Taking from her boſom a ſmall white ſattin caſe, which contained the laſt note I ever wrote her, and the *carte blanche*, to which was only added my ſignature)—" Now tell me" (preſenting them to me) " what am I to expect from your former profeſſions?—You have already declared you are not married——"

" And I again declare it, Madam. But——" I pauſed.———Pity, Montroſe, the delicate part I had to act.—My embarraſſment betrayed the ſituation of my heart.

" In your heſitation, Courtland," ſaid ſhe, with dignity, " I read my ſentence. Do not trifle with me."

" I will not, Madam. Times, ſince I laſt ſaw your ladyſhip, are much changed; and——"

" Enough!—Enough!" added ſhe, burſting into tears. " You have explained yourſelf ſufficiently."

Here Lady Auguſta Finleigh, whom I wiſhed at the devil, made her appearance; and, aſſuming that hypocritical ſoftneſs which has helped on a bad cauſe more than once, ſhe hoped her dear Marchioneſs had received ſuch tender conſolation from the author of her complaint

plaint that every cauſe for ſorrow was removed.

" Real diſorders, Madam," retorted I, " are not to be cured by imaginary remedies. The Marchioneſs has been, and ſtill is, very much indiſpoſed."

She ſaid, ſhe was extremely ſorry for it: but that ſhe had forewarned the Marchioneſs the preceding evening to guard her heart againſt all ſurpriſes; for when ſhe aſked her to honour her aſſembly with her preſence, ſhe told her the dangers it might encounter from a haughty Briton. " But," added ſhe, " I might have ſpared myſelf the caution, had I known that the beautiful Vilette, ſo much admired by Mr. Courtland, was Marchioneſs of Beaulieu."

How curſed cruel was it to involve me thus?——I thought the Marchioneſs's countenance cleared a little.

" But, pray tell me, Madam," ſaid the miſchievous devil, " (for Mr. Courtland is a general lover) has he given you the hiſtory of his little griſette?—If not, you cannot indulge him ſo much as in putting him upon relating it; for love has made the man wonderfully eloquent. Well, but pray," (addreſſing herſelf to me) " let me hear you deſcribe Emme-

line

line to the Marchioneſs, that I may be ſure you draw her likeneſs."

"Dear Lady Auguſta, you ſee the Marchioneſs is not enough in ſpirits to cope with your vivacity."

"Come, come," interrupted ſhe, "don't look fooliſh, man—though bluſhing becomes you mightily. You caught it of Emmeline, I ſuppoſe.——How eaſily the beſt-bred men may contract plebeian habits!——Emmeline, I think, never boaſts of her pedigree.—O, your ladyſhip can't imagine what a pretty ruſtic it is.—Wild as the lark—gentle as the lamb—tender as the dove—and artful as the hyæna. Then for languiſhing eyes—ruby lips—glowing cheeks—ivory teeth—ſuch hair—ſuch a complexion—ſuch a ſhape!——O, all ye gods and goddeſſes! not even the roving heart of Courtland but muſt feel a more than tranſient rapture at ſuch an aſſemblage of perfections!——But I'll leave him to finiſh the portrait. So adieu, my dear Marchioneſs—adieu," kiſſing her hand; and then glided off, like the genuine ſpirit of miſchief.

The Marchioneſs turned pale as death, and in a faint voice exclaimed, "Then I ſee my wretchedneſs is complete; for what

what I but ſuſpected is at length confirmed!——O, Courtland, your unkindneſs has lodged the arrow of death in my boſom!"——(She threw her handkerchief over her face; then, claſping her hands)—"Thus let me hide my ſhame; thus let my burning bluſhes drink up my tears. Now talk to me of Emmeline."

I ſaid, the ſubject ſhe requeſted was of too delicate a nature to be diſcuſſed at preſent. But when I ſaw her more compoſed, I held myſelf ready to obey her commands; but yet I could wiſh——

"I underſtand you, Sir," (with quickneſs.) "It is generous in you to withhold from me what you think would give me pain. Yes, you fear to tell me that a woman has forfeited her dignity when ſhe condeſcends to entreat compaſſion from the man ſhe loves. But my puniſhment is complete; yet do not think me vicious, Courtland——I am only weak."

I told her I never had a higher reſpect for her than in the preſent moment; and that her honour and happineſs would be ever dear to me: that I would promiſe to engage for her the regard and friendſhip of all my family."

"If ſo," added ſhe, with a ſigh, "you do not think meanly of me?"

"Indeed,

"Indeed, Madam, I do not."

"You muſt indulge me then, Courtland, by talking to me of Emmeline."

"Pardon me, Madam. On any other ſubject I ſhall be proud to oblige you.—Can I, conſiſtently either with delicacy or decorum, declare my ſentiments of one lady to another, who does me the honour to——. Excuſe me—I cannot——"

"You cannot otherwiſe oblige me, Sir," continued ſhe.

"Then, Madam, thus urged, remember compliance becomes a duty. But ſpare me—indeed I cannot proceed"—and again pauſed.

"Nay, do not heſitate," rejoined ſhe; "learn fortitude of me.—You love Emmeline——"

"I do, Madam. She is as dear to my heart as the vital drops which warm it"—(ſhe ſighed);—"and let that confeſſion for the preſent ſuffice," added I.

"Nay, but it muſt not. Pray, proceed, Sir."

Bowing, I went on. "I have loved her, Madam, with the fondeſt paſſion, from her infancy."

"Can that be poſſible?" exclaimed ſhe.

"It

" It is true, as it is poſſible, Madam. Even from her infancy, I again repeat, I have loved her. She was brought up with my ſiſter; and I date the commencement of my paſſion for her from the firſt moment ſhe began to liſp imperfect ſentences, which has continued to increaſe with her years. Though I was too young to be conſcious of its meaning, and though it was ſmothered by new objects when I went abroad, yet it was never totally extinguiſhed; for what elſe could have defended my heart from ſetting a proper eſtimate on worth like your ladyſhip's, which it will be ever my pride to acknowledge, though it never can be in my power to make it ſuitable returns"—(Again ſhe ſighed.——I continued.)—" Pardon my frankneſs, Madam; but the ſubject is too ſerious to be treated lightly. On my return to England, I found my Emmeline, whom I left a child, grown into the accompliſhed woman; and every ſentiment I had formed of her in my boyiſh days now glowed again in my breaſt with reanimated warmth: yet, though I continued for many months to love her with the moſt impaſſioned fondneſs, I loved without hope; nor, till within a few weeks, have I dared to flatter myſelf

that

that the ſenſations of her ſoul were ever in uniſon with my own; for her dutiful affection for my father, who became a parent to her when ſhe loſt her own, made her ſacrifice the ſon, leſt ſhe ſhould incur the cenſure of ingratitude towards the beſt of men."

"O! why do I live," interrupted ſhe, "to diſgrace a ſex to which your Emmeline belongs!——Happy, happy girl, who could command the feelings of her heart to ſubmit to the ſtrong ſenſe ſhe had of her duty."

Adieu for the preſent.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER VI.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

I SENT a card the next morning to let the Marchioneſs know that I was at her entire diſpoſal for the evening, if ſhe were not better engaged.

I found only Mademoiſelle Linon with her, who made her exit ſoon after I made my entré. There wants no Lavater to pronounce

pronounce her's a bad phyſiognomy; ſhe was ever my averſion. The Marchioneſs was in ſome tribulation, having loſt the letter which I informed you in my laſt I formerly ſent her, wherein I offered her my hand in caſe ſhe rejected the Marquis. She taxed me with having purloined it; but I aſſured her in the moſt ſolemn terms, I had never ſeen it ſince I returned it to her hands the day before.

"But why," cried ſhe, "ſhould I now lament for that which can avail me nothing? yet I felt myſelf rich in poſſeſſing it. But," continued ſhe, "I have not yet thanked you for the favour of this viſit. Do you know your kindneſs will ſooner teach my heart its duty, than the moſt glaring negligence? But you muſt indulge me again by talking of your Emmeline, for could I but catch a ſimple grace from ſo fair an original, I might be ſtill not unworthy your regard." I entreated the ſubject might be diſcontinued.

In reply ſhe ſaid, ſhe muſt be obliged. "If I were as handſome as Emmeline," ſaid ſhe, "would you not then—" and pauſed. —Emmeline, Madam, is not very handſome; yet her features are ſo intereſting, they make a more laſting impreſſion on the mind, than the moſt conſummate beauty, where ſoul and ſpirit lend not their all-ſubduing powers.—Mere beauty may

kindle a tranſient paſſion, but will never fix a laſting flame. "So much for her beauty," added ſhe; "what then are her accompliſhments?"

Emmeline looks lightly on all accompliſhments, Madam, which do not teach the heart a virtue: moſt women of the preſent age are highly accompliſhed—but Emmeline's principal ſtudy is, how to be moſt amiable.

"Does ſhe not dance to perfection?"—I have hardly ever ſeen her dance, Madam, but the graces are all her own.

"Does ſhe not ſing and play finely?"—I never heard her ſing much, but her voice in converſation is melody itſelf.

One queſtion more, Courtland, and I have done—"What arts, what magic has ſhe made uſe of, to fix your inconſtant heart?"

By diſclaiming all art, Madam; by being always natural, eaſy, and good-humoured; by avoiding every ſpecies of coquetry in her behaviour; by reproving me when my conduct merited reprehenſion, and by beſtowing upon me her tribute of praiſe when ſhe thought I deſerved it.

"But tell me," interrupted ſhe, "is there no unguarded moment of her life, that could bring her nearer on a level with her imprudent ſex?"

Not

Not one, Madam, that comes within my cognizance; but women who are habitually diſcreet, are very unlike the outrageouſly virtuous, who are hourly injuring that cauſe they ſo arduouſly labour to ſupport; for, by always ſeeming to act on the defenſive, they frequently ſtimulate men to attempt diſcovering whether it be real or aſſumed.

"O why cannot I think and act like this Emmeline?" ſaid ſhe, with violence.

Only ſuffer your reaſon to preſide over that good ſenſe you poſſeſs, my dear Marchioneſs, and you will be all your friends could wiſh you.

Then ſighing heavily, ſhe drew from her ſtays a ſmall miniature, with which in the days of my folly and indiſcretion I had preſented her.

"This is cold cordial," added ſhe, "to a boſom who has ſo ſtrong a ſenſe of the worth of the original: yet, notwithſtanding, I ſet a higher value upon it than all the treaſures of the world beſide." After having gazed upon it for a moment, ſhe was again returning it to her boſom, when laying my hand upon it, I begged I might commit it to the flames.

What a ſhower of paſſionate exclamations did it produce!

" No, Courtland," cried ſhe, " whilſt I live will I treaſure it in my boſom; it has been long the faithful partner of my ſorrows; when I am dead, then take the fatal miſchief from me, preſent it your Emmeline, and tell her, that Death had no pangs for her who had out-lived hope."

When I had talked her mind into ſome degree of tranquillity, in order to divert the ſubject, I ſaid it was a long time ſince ſhe had indulged me with a game at picquet; I rung the bell; ſhe feared to refuſe me—On the entrance of the ſervant ſhe ordered cards.

In the courſe of converſation, I begged her to be very cautious in her conduct before Lady Auguſta Finleigh (who, I was ſorry to find, had ſpent the morning with her), as ſhe had long been the declared enemy of every fair face who honoured me with its regard.

I ſicken to death, Montroſe, at the bare idea, leſt any malicious reports ſhould reach my Emmeline reſpecting my viſits to the Marchioneſs.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER VII.

Miſs Ackworth *to* H. Courtland, *Eſq.*

Roſelands.

COULD the real motives be known, my dear Sir, whence many of our beſt actions ſpring, our title to praiſe I fear ſometimes would be but ſmall; for I had not written to you this poſt, but to procure myſelf a pleaſure.

I have a ſhort ſtory to commit to your criticiſm. I expect your cenſures, whilſt I intreat your mercy.—I wiſh every part of my conduct ſhould be ſo open to your obſervation, that it ſhould not be obſcured by a ſingle ſhade.

You muſt not call me a vain girl; though if ever woman had cauſe for vanity, it is your Emmeline; for are you not the ſource whence ſhe derives all her pride? and, rich in your love, the world has nothing elſe to beſtow worth her care.

But to the buſineſs in point:——

An unexpected gueſt preſented himſelf this morning at Roſelands: you will be ſurpriſed to find it was Lord Layton, and more ſo, when you know the purport of

his viſit. He converſed with us ſome time in his uſual whimſical way, till at length he ſaid, he wiſhed for half an hour's private converſation with me, for that he had travelled poſt to beg me to take down his laſt words and dying ſpeech in ſhort-hand.

Then turning to Mrs. Maitland, he ſaid, "I have long known you, Madam, to be a *very good ſort of woman*, and as you have never known me to be a *very good ſort of man*, I wiſh you would ſtep to your cloſet, and ſay a prayer or two for me. As for you, Miſs Courtland, your toilet is waiting your approach; pray look in the glaſs, and ſee how unmercifully rude the wind has treated that curl."

"As for you, Miſs Ackworth, the fiends of malice preſided at your birth, and gifted you with ſuch uglineſs, that it is not in the power of dreſs to mend you; in ſhort, you are ſo very ugly—I have never looked at you, but I have felt a palpitation at my heart, yet I cannot part with you."

Spight of my efforts, he turned the ladies out of the room, and then began as follows:

"You muſt know, Madam, that I am a man who have been always uſed to have my own way."

"So I perceive, my Lord."

"If

" If you are ſaucy already, Madam, I muſt chaſtiſe you before my tale is half over."——I bowed.

" When I was with you at the old manor in Warwickſhire, my friend Courtland aſſured me upon his honour, that you were under no engagement to him, though nothing leſs than an oath ſhould have made me credit ſuch an aſſertion. You know I have been once married. I hated my wife becauſe ſhe was a purchaſe of my father's, and ſhe hated me becauſe I could never diſcover in her perfections which ſhe had not; ſo from the day we were married, we took a different route, like other people of faſhion, frequently meeting at viſits, but never at home:—The laws of the land at length kindly took my cauſe into conſideration, and a few days ſince were graciouſly pleaſed to *un-wife* me,—yet I am willing again to reſume my chains, if you will condeſcend to put them on me.—The firſt time I ever ſaw you, I loved you—the ſecond I adored you—and ſo on. Though I am an odd fellow, I am not an ill-natured one—I have ſeen enough of the world to deſpiſe it—I have abuſed a good fortune, but not uſed it."

" I beg, nay entreat your Lordſhip to have done."

" Preſently,

" Preſently, my deareſt creature; preſently—I muſt be heard. Till I beheld you, I looked upon every fair face I ſaw, as a mere puppet dreſſed out for public exhibition, to catch us fools who ſtop to ſtare. I had no notion I ſhould ever find a pretty woman who poſſeſſed a heart formed to exerciſe the ſocial duties, who would participate with me the pleaſures of friendſhip, or inſpire my boſom with ſenſations of virtuous love. In ſhort, Madam, the whole tribe of handſome women I looked upon to be mere noſegays, intended by nature to regale our ſenſes, not to chaſten and refine them. Tell me now—and don't offer to play all your ſex's tricks upon me, becauſe you ſee me a downright blunt fellow—do you think, that when I have copied ſome of the virtues of your life into mine, that you could ever love me?"

" Your Lordſhip's abrupt queſtion demands, I think, an abrupt anſwer—— Then poſitively I could not;"—ſmiling. " And now you muſt permit me to call back our friends." I was going.— But by his ſoul, he ſaid, I ſhould not go (ſnatching my hand) till I informed him if I were under ſerious engagements to any man on earth; for otherwiſe he would perſecute me with his paſſion to the laſt hour of his exiſtence.

I co-

I coloured like ſcarlet.

" Enough," cried he; " that bluſh betrays you—but who the devil is the object? It can't be Courtland then,—for he is dancing attendance in London on an old flame, a fantaſtical Frenchwoman; for all Engliſhmen in Paris have, you muſt know, bowed at the ſhrine of Saint Vilette; but ſhe was ever more inclined to grant abſolution to his preſumption, than to any of the reſt of his countrymen; but ſome how or other, ſhe forgot her divinity-ſhip, and united herſelf to a man old enough to be her father; for he had an immenſe fortune and an ancient title to beſtow on her; ſo here ambition gave Cupid a knock on the head, and now I find death has knocked my Lord Marquis on the head alſo, and my Lady Marchioneſs is come to London to offer the cold remnants of her widowed boſom to the glowing ardours of a Courtland's.—Upon my ſoul, Madam, I do grudge ſuch a noble fellow to any Frenchwoman upon earth."

I could not help ſmiling at the improbability of his ſtory.

" Why do you ſmile?" rejoined he.

" At the abſurdity of your Lordſhip's behaviour," added I.

" If I am abſurd," returned he, " I will not allow you to be ſaucy, Madam;

tell me ſincerely now, though I am not what the world call a *thoroughly* reformed man, don't you think it is in your power to make me one? I am a very good tempered fellow."

"So much the better, my Lord; but nothing leſs than the interpoſition of Providence can reform the principles of a libertine; and therefore I reſign the taſk: for after all, a reformed rake is but a creature weary of vice, becauſe loſs of health and loſs of fortune have palled his appetite for the enjoyment of it; his ſoul at length wants repoſe; he cannot look back, for there is no virtuous action of his life which can afford it him; and he dares not look forward, becauſe repentance is the only companion which is likely to abide by him in his old age."

"Thou art a divine preacher," ſnatching my hand; "what a ſermon!"

"The ſubject was of your own chuſing, my Lord."

"Which your Ladyſhip has handled moſt curſedly ſevere," added he.—"Only promiſe to take me under your direction, and you ſhall find me the moſt conformable creature breathing; we'll live like any pious rector and his lady, we'll go to church together every Sunday."

"The

" The man who ſacrifices to forms only, my Lord, though he cheats the world into a belief of his piety, cheats himſelf alſo out of the ſolid advantages it would procure him."

" Well well then," interrupted he, " you ſhall have it all your own way; we will not go to church, we will never quarrel about trifles."

" Trifles! my Lord," ſeriouſly.

" Well, my dear creature, only grant my love a fair trial."

" It is time then I ſhould be ſerious, my Lord, and tell you every affection of my heart has been long in poſſeſſion of the moſt amiable of men, who has been generouſly pleaſed to diſtinguiſh me, whilſt the firſt of my ſex would think themſelves honoured by his alliance."

" What do I hear!" cried he; " I reſpect you too much then, Madam, to entertain you on this ſubject again. If I have offended you, ſuffer me to depart with your entire forgiveneſs. You have more than once ſeen me act like a very fooliſh man; you now ſee me feel like a very weak woman," taking out his handkerchief; " yet do not forbid me the tender ſatisfaction of loving you, becauſe as long as your dear idea dwells in my breaſt, it muſt retain a ſtrong ſenſe of the beauties

of virtue."—He ruſhed out of the room—and I heard his carriage drive off before I had recovered from the perturbation into which his ſtrange behaviour had thrown me.

What ſhall I do, my dear friend, ſhould you put unfavourable conſtructions on my behaviour! Judge of it with your uſual candour, and then I ſhall not tremble to meet your reproaches when you viſit Roſelands.

In ten days you will be with us: every thought of my exiſtence will be crowding forward to that happy moment. How many hearts will your appearance gladden! with what parental regard the General will welcome his ſon!—My Sophy, too, will embrace a brother, Heaven only knows how dear to her—your old friend Mrs. Maitland will rejoice to ſee you—and your Emmeline, overpowered with the general joy, though ſhe be unable to expreſs what ſhe feels, yet ſhall ſhe ſilently teach her heart to pray Heaven to ſhower its choiceſt bleſſings on the loved author of all its tender ſenſations. Adieu.

Your's, &c. &c.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER VIII.

H. Courtland, *Eſq.* *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq.*

Great Ormond Street.

AH, Montroſe! how cruelly is my peace invaded, whilſt my fond ſoul is full of love and Emmeline.—My humanity is tortured by the ill-fated paſſion of the unhappy Marchioneſs.—Lady Auguſta purſues me with a fiend-like malice; ſhe has certainly a great capacity for miſchief, and whilſt ſhe treats me with the open confidence of friendſhip, ſhe is privately ſtabbing me like an aſſaſſin.

From the general civility of my conduct towards the Marchioneſs, I flattered myſelf, as ſhe knew my attachment to my Emmeline, that the violence of her regard for me would ſoon ſubſide into a tranquil friendſhip. I had caſually hinted to her, that I was to leave town in a few days, and promiſed myſelf the pleaſure of ſeeing her again immediately on my return.—She looked diſappointed, but made not the leaſt oppoſition to it.

In the evening previous to my departure for Roſelands the next morning, I called

called on her, and found her a prey to the moſt heart-rending grief. I aſked her if any diſagreeable intelligence had been received from France.

"No," cried ſhe, wringing her hands, "this country contains the cauſe of all my ſorrow! my heart is broken, and the ſtroke of death I hope ſoon will ſilence for ever its anguiſh"—and down ſhe ſunk lifeleſs on her ſeat. By the aſſiſtance of Mademoiſelle Linon and her woman, at length ſhe revived.

On perceiving I was attentive to her ſituation, "O why," exclaimed ſhe, with eyes darting fire, "do you bring me back again to life? do you envy me, Courtland, this ſhort repoſe from pain, which the deprivation of my ſenſes has given me?—but go" (puſhing me from her), "go tell your Emmeline how much you deſpiſe a fond fooliſh woman."

"Be compoſed, my dear Marchioneſs."

"No, Sir, though my mind be all a tempeſt, yet it is too proud to ſolicit your compaſſion—go."

I bowed, and appeared going.

She ſprung from the ſofa, caught hold of my arm, and ſunk down at my feet.

"O no! ſtay one moment—for here I ſwear by Heaven, never to riſe till you make me one promiſe."

"I will

"I will make no promiſe," ſaid I, endeavouring to raiſe her, "whilſt you give way to an exceſs of paſſion that obſcures all the faculties of your mind: let me conjure you to temporize a little with your feelings."

"To temporize with my feelings!" cried ſhe. "As well you may bid the raging tempeſt forget its roarings, the ſun and moon ceaſe to perform their daily revolutions, or tell all nature to change its courſe, becauſe man, the greateſt monſter it contains, is ſuffered to lord it o'er its creatures."

I endeavoured to repreſent to her the romantic abſurdity of her conduct, and again entreated her to be more calm, if ſhe wiſhed to preſerve my eſteem.

"Good Heaven!" again claſping her hands, "if I wiſh to preſerve your eſteem! Do I not prize it beyond every good the world can give me beſide; but my poor heart is now deprived of its laſt dear hope: Lady Auguſta Finleigh tells me you are going to *viſit*—alas! my tears will not ſuffer me to pronounce a name ſo fatal to my peace.—Tell me, are you not going to Roſelands?"

"I am, Madam; but had not Lady Auguſta thought my abſence might occaſion you ſome concern, ſhe would not have

have been ſo officious as to have informed you of it: ſhe knew alſo, it would greatly diſtreſs *me*, to be the cauſe of pain to *you:* therefore let me conjure *you* to defeat *her* malice, by ſuffering me to depart without honouring my abſence with a ſingle regret—for go I muſt—it would wound my honour ſhould I any longer protract my journey."

" Then hear me firſt," added ſhe with great quickneſs; " for I have vowed, Courtland, and the bleſſed Virgin hath regiſtered it in her book, nay, by all the ſaints I have vowed, never to ſurvive your departure."—Then turning from me a moment, ſhe would have ſheathed a penknife in her boſom, ſo highly was her phrenzy wrought, if I had not ſecured her arm. She ſtruggled violently to retain the horrid implement of miſchief, and in the ſtruggle I received a cut acroſs my wriſt, which penetrated to the bone; the blood ſtreamed copiouſly, ſhe ſtood ſpeechleſs with horror, though I aſſured her the hurt was but trifling.

She ſunk down upon the floor. " Adieu for ever," ſaid ſhe; " death is welcome to me, ſince I die without being my own executioner."

Never, Montroſe, did I ſee ſo touching a ſpectacle—her face became inſtantly pale

pale as death—her eyes, though wide open, were void of ſight—her boſom, hands, and linen, were all ſtained with my blood. Before I could diſengage my hand from her's to ring the bell for aſſiſtance, Mademoiſelle Linon and her woman appeared as before, and whilſt they endeavoured to recall her ſcattered ſenſes, I tied up my wound as well as I could.

Not ſeeing me when her recollection returned, ſhe exclaimed, "What! is he gone, Linon? O fly, tell him the wound he has received, was meditated in my phrenzy againſt my own breaſt; entreat him to forgive me, and tell him, that had not reaſon deſerted me, I would not have attempted to curtail a life, which at the moſt can be but ſhort, when every moment is blackened with deſpair."

Again I would have ſoothed her—when ſhe interrupted me, ſaying, "I will not be indebted to your pity, Courtland—nor will I ſurvive your contempt. I have taſted the cup of life, and found its contents a compoſition of bitterneſs. I will drink of it no more.—All murmurings ceaſe among the dead; the grave is the only aſylum to which the wretched look forward with hope; and if you leave me now, you only haſten my journey to it."

In

In ſuch a dilemma, knowing her determined temper, what could I do? I gave her a ſolemn promiſe not to leave town at leaſt for a week, provided ſhe would give me her promiſe to conduct herſelf with more diſcretion, or I would never ſee her more.

She ſaid ſhe would endeavour to oblige me, and then inſiſted I ſhould leave her and take care of myſelf.

What conſtruction, my dear friend, will be put on my conduct at Roſelands! What moments of tender tranſport in my beloved Emmeline's ſociety, have the violent paſſions of this woman overthrown!

Adieu. With the utmoſt difficulty I have ſcribbled thus far; my arm rages violently, and my fingers can no longer guide my pen.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER IX.

Miſs Ackworth *to Mrs.* Aylbert.

WOULD it not be unjuſt, my dear Madam, to cenſure the actions of a beloved friend till you know the motives by which they are actuated?

Alas!

Alas! how mutable are human expectations! with what pleaſing images does fancy clothe the mind, till diſappointment obliterates every trace of them from the memory; the brighteſt ſun is often obſcured by unforeſeen clouds, ere it has reached its meridian: ſo are my proſpects darkened in a ſad moment, when all looked gay before me.

Do not chide me, Madam, that my tears flow: my mind is weak, it has never been called forth till now, to bear affliction's pang.

The hour at length came, in which with anxious tenderneſs I hoped to meet my dear Mr. Courtland. How many lectures had I given my heart, to bear my happineſs with moderation! At the trampling of every foot, at the opening of every door, at the ruſtling of every wind, my palpitations encreaſed—he is come, cried I, I will fly to meet him—and then checked the emotion as being too free.—I bluſhed, whilſt the tear of joy ſilently ſtole down my cheek.

A letter from Wilſon (Mr. Courtland's valet) to the General at length put an end to our high-raiſed expectations, importing that buſineſs will prevent his maſter from writing for a few poſts. Is not this very ſingular conduct? What am I to conjecture?

conjecture? Lord Layton told me of a French lady, who was come to London in purſuit of Mr. Courtland; his Lordſhip ſaid Mr. Courtland once loved her. Who knows——but I will not harbour ſuſpicions unworthy of him: he may be perplexed—he may be unhappy—what torture lies in the thought!

(In Continuation.)

Ah, Madam! I have indulged curioſity at the expence of my peace: I hope the pain it has given me will be ſome extenuation for the fault.

Going into Mrs. Maitland's dreſſing-room, I picked up a letter, which I knew to be the ſame ſhe had juſt received by the poſt. I remembered that after having peruſed it, ſhe gave it the General; as he read it, he fixed his eyes upon me, whilſt his countenance betrayed ſuch a tender concern, as ſhook my very ſoul. I left the room to give vent to my tears.—As ſoon as I had recovered ſome degree of compoſure, I went in purſuit of Mrs. Maitland, to aſk if her letter gave any intelligence of Mr. Courtland; when I found it as related above.

It gave a circumſtantial account of Mr. Courtland's preſent connection with the Marchioneſs of Beaulieu, with whom he was

was formerly on the point of marriage, and which it was now generally believed would ſoon be concluded.

I had ſcarcely got through the letter, when Mrs. Maitland miſſing it, came in ſearch of it. Gueſs her aſtoniſhment, if you can, to find it in my hands.—"It is too late, my ſweet child, I fear," ſaid ſhe, "to conceal from you the contents of that letter; but let me conjure you to give no faith to them: report is often proved a liar; and therefore let us not condemn our friends, without hearing their juſtification."

"I will do all you require of me, my deareſt Madam," ſaid I, "ſo you do not command me not to weep; and you muſt indulge me with the pleaſure of talking of ſomebody,—he once loved your Emmeline,—ah! how tenderly did he love her!—and ſhe repaid his tenderneſs with an affection which time can never leſſen."

My ſpirits were too much oppreſſed to permit me to ſend off my letter by the laſt poſt. If there be a climax in wretchedneſs, I have reached it. With anxious expectation I ſat waiting the arrival of the poſtman; his rap was muſic to my ear. I flew to him, unable to wait the tedious movements of the ſervant. Amongſt many letters there was only one addreſſed

to

to myſelf: with trembling impatience I broke the ſeal: the contents were written by Mr. Courtland: never will I reveal them: to me he is for ever loſt.—O pity the pangs which heave the ſighing boſom—I will not complain—the eye of pity ſhall never overflow at my ſad tale: the tender breaſt ſhall never throb for pains it can't remove.

Pray for me, deareſt Madam, that a fatal deſpondency may not triumph over chriſtian fortitude. Pain is the lot of humanity, and who ſhall dare repine at the diſpenſation of their Maker?—Adieu.

E. ACKWORTH.

LETTER X.

H. Courtland, *Eſq*; *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq*.

IT is the firſt time theſe fifteen days I have been able to hold a pen. The inflammation in my arm has run very high; but the danger, they tell me, is now paſt.

I made Wilſon write to my father to account to him for my ſilence; and to beg him to engage my Emmeline to write to me, but on no account to hurt her feelings by mentioning my diſaſter to her.

During my confinement I have been favoured with only one letter from Roſelands, and that from my father, but ſo cold, ſo reſerved is his ſtyle, I fear he attributes my ſtay to other motives than the real one.—What ſhall I do, if my viſits to the Marchioneſs ſhould have been unfairly ſtated to my gentle love! O what a contraſt does nature exhibit in the two women! the one gentle, bluſhing, tender; the other fond, violent, and extravagant, demanding love—not ſoliciting affection.

I feel myſelf in a kind of widowed ſtate, if I may be allowed the expreſſion.—I who ſo lately experienced at the ſlighteſt indiſpoſition the anxious concern of a father, the fond affection of a ſiſter, the kind, the tender ſoothings of my Emmeline—and now to be deprived of them all, quite ſubdues my ſpirits.

Silent and taſteleſs are all my meals: I ſit down to table, I riſe again, and walk the room,—again I reſume my ſeat. My ſervants ſcrutinize my conduct, they look all they fear to ſay: I order them to remove my untaſted repaſt—honeſt Wilſon interpoſes his authority.

I cannot reſiſt his affectionate entreaties; and then to give the higheſt zeſt to the entertainment, he ſays, if I do not eat to get ſtrength, a certain lady at Roſelands will break her heart at my abſence.

This

This braces my nerves more than all the medicine I have been taking. I hope the ſurgeon will give me leave to depart in a few days. How my heart pants for the moment which carries me to my love!

The Marchioneſs, I find, has behaved with more compoſure during my confinement; at leaſt the notes I have received from her aſſure me ſhe has.—I am determined not to ſee her before I leave town. I have ſacrificed to *her* fury, and 'tis now time to indulge *my* love. Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XI.

Mrs. Maitland *to Miſs* Courtland.

Soho Square.

I PROMISED you, my dear Miſs Courtland, on quitting Roſelands, to be as minute as poſſible in every particular relative to your brother.

The morning after my arrival I incloſed your letter to him, with a card of enquiry after his health; but for two days after I heard nothing from him; on the third morning he preſented himſelf, his arm hung

hung in a black crape;—ſo there was ſome foundation for his illneſs, thought I; and his pale dejected countenance ſomewhat ſoftened the reſentment with which his late conduct had armed me.

"Bleſs me," ſaid I, on ſeeing him, "a viſit from ſo gallant a gentleman as Mr. Courtland, is what an old woman had no right to expect."

He ſaid, had he not been out of town, he ſhould not have thus long delayed his thanks for my note, or to have made proper enquiries after the family I had left. "O Mrs. Maitland," exclaimed he, "my heart is burſting with anxiety: tell me, Is my dear Emmeline well? Does ſhe feel no compunction for her long ſilence?"

"She concluded, Sir, that her letters would prove very inſipid to a perſon ſo abſorbed in the pleaſures of the world as Mr. Courtland."

"Don't be ſevere upon me, Mrs. Maitland—I want conſolation, not reproof.—My peace has been cruelly wounded ſince laſt I ſaw my beſt love: did ſhe know what I have ſuffered, ſhe would pity me. But tell me, Does ſhe never ſpeak of me?"

"Sometimes," added I; "but as nothing can be ſaid to your advantage, we had beſt drop the ſubject. Your not coming to Roſelands according to expect-

ation—to be ſure ſhe took it unkindly at firſt, and her tears did ſometimes moiſten the little food ſhe ate; but Sir Edward Warren and his ſiſter ſpent a couple of days with us, and it revived her ſpirits much. Upon my word a very pretty gentleman that Sir Edward"—Up ſtarted your brother, beating his brains for mere vexation. —"What, have you got the tooth-ache?" ſaid I; "tis a horrid pain."

"No, Madam; I have got the heart-ache." "Well, Sir, and how do you like the ſenſation? for you have been very ingenious in communicating your preſent feelings to your friends."—

"Good morning t'ye Madam;" bowing—and was going.

"Nay, nay," laying hold of his arm, "I can't part with you yet; I have much to ſay to you from Emmeline."—

"Tell me firſt, I conjure you then," cried he, "did ſhe ſhare in the feſtivity of the ſeaſon at Roſelands?"

"That is a ſtrange queſtion, Sir; you know the natural gaiety and vivacity of her temper."—

"Yes, yes, I do know it; but one ſhould have thought—Well, no matter—and ſo ſhe was happy, very—very happy. But have you brought me a letter from her?"

"Not

" Not a line, I aſſure you, Sir."—

He felt too much to reply.—At that inſtant Dr. Frampton made his appearance, whom I had left up ſtairs.—I aſked him how he found his patient? He ſaid, he ſhould be apprehenſive of fatal conſequences, if the violence of her cough could not be ſubdued; and that as ſoon as ſhe was in a ſtate for travelling, he ſhould adviſe the Briſtol waters: " For ſuch a charming creature," added he, " muſt be an irreparable loſs to her friends."

I told him, ſhe would indeed—for ſhe was an excellent girl, though a little tinctured with romance, and was far gone in the doctrine of dying for love.

" Poor girl!" added your brother with a ſigh; " I can feel for her."—" But by what means did the young lady get this illneſs?" aſked the doctor.

" By a very imprudent ſtep," added I: " Having reaſon for many days together to expect the arrival of her lover, ſhe ſhunned all company, to ſtroll alone on the turnpike roads, to meet him; when one day, hurried on by the ſpirit of romantic love, ſhe found herſelf many miles from home, where ſhe was ſurpriſed by a violent ſhower of hail and rain, which wetted her to the ſkin, and brought on a

ſore throat and fever, the remnants of which, Doctor, I hope it lies within your ſkill to remove."

"I aſſure you, Madam," rejoined he, "if it lies within the compaſs of my ſkill and attention to reſtore Miſs Ackworth to health—"

It was now too late to conceal the miſchief. "Great heavens!" exclaimed your brother, "What do I hear? O Mrs. Maitland! if you would not torture me to death, lead me to the dear ſuffering angel; is it poſſible ſhe can be in this houſe, and you conceal her from my fond impatience; for living, or dying, is ſhe not mine?"

I begged him to moderate his ardour; for I did not know I could introduce him without her permiſſion; and entreated him to be patient a little.

"How can I be patient," ſaid he, "when all I hold dear in life is withheld from me?—But I ſee there is a combination againſt me; and whether I am connected with friends or enemies, I am doomed alike to ſuffer. O Mrs. Maitland, give me but my deareſt Emmeline, and in my own perſon I will be content to ſuffer the ſevereſt tortures with which it can pleaſe Heaven to afflict me. Dear Doctor, will you not plead for me?"

The

The doctor ſaid, he thought the ſight of ſuch a lover would do more towards effecting the lady's recovery, than all the powers of phyſic, provided he was not too abruptly introduced to her. He took his leave.—

I then informed your brother, that Mr. Montroſe had written to your father a full account of his preſent connection with the Marchioneſs; and had the pleaſure to inform him, that his conduct towards her was much approved by him; and that he further hoped, he would ſtill continue to treat her with the utmoſt attention and reſpect; and as the Marchioneſs was fully acquainted with his engagement, his father doubted not but a ſhort time would bring her to exchange the fire of love for the lambent flame of friendſhip. I further added, the General had informed his Emmeline of his preſent embarraſſment, part of which ſhe had heard from report, leſt the delicacy of her mind might become a prey to inquietude—"She ſmiled," continued I, "and gave us the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that ſhe had not the leaſt doubt that you would ever violate that tender affection you had ſo often vowed was unalienably hers. She likewiſe thanked your father for the generous confidence he had been pleaſed

to place in her, as it had eraſed from her mind a ſmall taint of ſuſpicion which ſhe acknowledged with a bluſh had ſome time ſince found its way thither.

"For ſeveral days after this ſhe behaved with her uſual cheerfulneſs; but all on a ſudden ſhe became a prey to the profoundeſt melancholy. Sighs and tears ſeemed the choſen companions of her boſom.—She would ſteal out unperceived, and walk whole hours on the road which you muſt neceſſarily paſs to Roſelands. In one of theſe ſolitary rambles, as I told you before, ſhe was overtaken in a violent ſhower of rain, which brought on the cough and fever which now confine her." I then told him that we had travelled very ſlowly, but her impatience to ſee *him* once more, made *her* regardleſs of all fatigue.

"Dear creature," cried he, affecting to conceal tears that he thought unmanly to betray, "how much pain have I unintentionally given her dear boſom! I feel ſo much oppreſſed at the thought of it, that I fear I cannot ſuſtain her reſentment. But lead me to her, my dear Mrs. Maitland, and promiſe me that you will plead for me."

Moſt willingly, I told him; but I had more hopes of bringing about a reconciliation

ciliation through his means than my own.—I bid him pluck up his ſpirits, and follow me—As I led to the door, he dropped behind, ſaying, "If I die I can go no further. How can I meet the terrors of a judge, who I know is predetermined to pronounce ſentence againſt me!"

"Pooh," ſaid I, "you pretend to be a lover, and ſuppoſe that a young lady as tenderly attached as Miſs Ackworth is to you, will not be eager to extend the ſceptre of her forgiveneſs, upon a full conviction of your penitence—Where is your courage?"

"Gone, every atom; it expired the very moment I learned that I had incurred my angel's diſpleaſure. O Mrs. Maitland, my boſom is now the very ſeat of cowardice."

"Shall I go then, and prepare her to receive your viſit?" ſaid I.

"O no, no!" cried he; "for ſhould ſhe refuſe to ſee me, I know not what wild extravagance the diſappointment would urge me to commit—But lead on."

I obeyed. She was in her dreſſing-room, lying on a ſofa near the fire.—I made your brother promiſe not to advance till I gave him the ſignal. "I have intelligence from our friend Courtland," ſaid I, ſeating myſelf by her. "He has been out

of town for a few days for the recovery of his health and ſpirits; which was the reaſon he never anſwered the note I ſent him to inform him of our arrival—I find he is extremely hurt, leſt you ſhould conſtrue his ſilence into wilful neglect."

"A modern fine gentleman, Mrs. Maitland," ſaid ſhe, "would rather you ſhould reproach him for having broken the whole ten commandments, than that he ſhould be accuſed of having violated a ſingle rule of politeneſs."

"That is not Mr. Courtland's caſe, my dear; he has been under ſome apprehenſion of loſing his right arm from an accident."

"I wiſh then," ſaid ſhe, "you had not told me of it; for how can my heart act with firmneſs in the cauſe of virtue, while my boſom is deluged with pity for the ſufferings of the delinquent! Should he call, my dear Mrs. Maitland, do not let me ſee him for the world; for I am ſo weak and low at preſent, I know it would but afflict him, though circumſtances are ſo greatly changed; yet my poor heart is ſtill the ſame, and could not bear to ſee him ſuffer."

A violent fit of coughing obliged her to raiſe herſelf; ſhe ſaw your poor ſpiritleſs brother—He flew to her, and would have

have ſupported her in his arms; but ſhe repulſed him with a violence of which I did not think her capable; and begged him to leave her, till ſhe was better enabled to receive his viſit.

With trembling heſitation, he told her, he could not leave her, till he knew what he had done to have incurred her diſpleaſure; that the idea of it was agony to his ſoul.

She told him, ſhe was ſurpriſed her conduct ſhould give him pain; that ſo far from intending it, it had been her whole ſtudy how to make him happy, though *ſeparate intereſts* muſt now take place.

"*Separate intereſts*, my deareſt life! Why will you afflict me thus?"

"Did you but know my motives for the expreſſion," rejoined ſhe, "you would be generous enough to acknowledge the propriety of it. Indeed I mean not to diſtreſs you—No, be aſſured the pain all lies here"—laying her hand on her boſom—"a pain I did not think I was capable of feeling, till I found myſelf on the point of loſing you for ever.—You muſt leave me now; in a few days I hope I ſhall be better, when I will beg the favour of ſeeing you again for the *laſt* time."—She pauſed, being nearly exhauſted.

Your afflicted brother wrapped his arms about her, his head ſunk upon her lap—he could not ſpeak.

I took that opportunity to urge her not to ſuffer an overſtrained punctilio to afflict the generous breaſt of your brother beyond what he was capable of bearing; for, like herſelf, he was weak in body, as well as oppreſſed in mind.

"It is with regret I ſee it, my dear friend," ſaid ſhe; "but take him from me, I cannot bear to ſee my Sophy's brother in anguiſh, when it is not in my power to adminiſter conſolation to him.—I thought that to releaſe him from all engagements with me, would have been a ſource of pleaſure to him, not a convulſive pang. Do take me from him, my dear Mrs. Maitland, ſince he will not go; for my ſtreaming eyes muſt not betray to him the emotions of my heart."—She then made an effort to go.

Upon which he raiſed his head, ſaying, "Beſt of women! ſurely you cannot know what it is to love, who can reſolve to torture a boſom which feels unkindneſs ſo exquiſitely as mine; if you will baniſh me for ever from you, indulge me firſt with the tender ſatisfaction of watching over you till you are reſtored to health; let me ſtrive, by every endearing art which

which fondneſs can ſuggeſt, to beguile you of every pain.—Then drive me from your preſence—but not till then."

"'Tis well," interrupted ſhe, "I have ſheathed my heart againſt your tendereſt ſolicitations, or it would yield to a weakneſs, which would now ſtamp it with diſhonour. O Mr. Courtland, I carry in my boſom the marks of a deadly blow, which muſt for ever diſunite us; and though it lies cold at my heart, yet it does not deaden the acuteneſs of my feelings. I would not ſo long have concealed the fatal evil from you, but that I ſee you wretched, when I thought to have found you all joy at the thoughts of our ſeparation. You muſt now leave me—and if, hereafter, reflection ſhould demand a moment's pauſe, it will tell you that the thoughtleſs caprices of youth may prove, in age, a ſource of ſubſtantial evil to thoſe who have unfortunately indulged them."—Tears choaked her utterance.

Your brother for ſome moments fixed his eyes in ſilent anguiſh upon her; then ſtarting on his feet, ruſhed out of the room.

She made me follow him, my woman coming in to attend her.

" 'Tis all over with me, my dear Mrs. Maitland," exclaimed he, dropping on the firſt chair he came to; I ſee—I ſee my dear girl's reaſon is diſturbed, otherwiſe it would not be in her nature to uſe me thus—and can I bear to live, to ſee that noble mind in ruins. What have I done that heaven ſhould thus afflict me? O I feel I have been guilty of idolatry, in worſhipping an object I now find to be a mere mortal."

I told him, I thought I could anſwer that her reaſon was unhurt, though there was an ambiguity in her language I could not account for; I again entreated him not to give way to an unavailing ſorrow, as I hoped a ſhort time would ſoon elucidate matters to our wiſhes—He then urged me to enquire how ſhe was.

I found her much worſe; the pain in her ſide was returned with greater violence than ever; ſhe was extremely hoarſe, and reſpired with great difficulty—I earneſtly entreated her, whatever might be her motives for her conduct towards Mr. Courtland, to be cautious how ſhe proceeded; and begged her to recollect how lately it was, that a miſapprehenſion had nearly coſt him his life.

She ſaid, ſhe was ſurpriſed to ſee him ſo much affected, which had determined

her not to act with too much precipitation; otherwiſe, what ſhe had to ſay to him could have been ſaid in a minute. "But could you have thought, my dear Mrs. Maitland, that a capricious heart like Mr. Courtland's could have poſſeſſed ſo much ſenſibility?—Yet go to him, ſpeak kindly to him, and tell him not to regret the loſs of what, in happieſt days, muſt ſhortly be compounded with the duſt—Tell him I will never reproach him—tell him I will love him ſtill—as much as is conſiſtent with the reſpect I owe myſelf."

I now quitted her to attend your brother, who eagerly aſked how I found his angel—Much worſe I told him, I feared from their late conference, at ſeeing him ſo much afflicted, when ſhe thought her conduct would have been productive of the higheſt joy to him.

"How can ſhe be ſo cruel, and yet ſo kind?" ſaid he. "Say what ſhe will, I will not reproach her, I will bear her reſentment though my heart burſt, whilſt I ſee her in ſo diſtreſsful a ſituation.—But, dear Mrs. Maitland, lead me to her again. Have I not an indiſputable right to ſee her, to talk with her; for is ſhe not mine, by every fond tie by which affection can bind us? Is there a magic in words,

words, that can unite *my* ſoul more cloſely to *her?*—Is there—"

He was proceeding, when her bell rang violently; he ſtarted up, then dropped on his ſeat again—" Great heavens," cried he, " do you not hear!—perhaps ſhe breathes her laſt.—Good God have mercy upon me, and ſpare me the killing anguiſh."—The bell continued ringing—my fears alſo were very great.—

We hurried to her apartment, where we found her almoſt in a ſtate of ſuffocation, from the pain in her ſide; your brother concluded her dying, he threw himſelf on his knees by her, and continued a long time gazing on her with ſuch ſilent anguiſh, that, ſpight of the pain ſhe endured, it did not paſs unnoticed by her.

I ordered Smithſon to ſend for doctor Frampton immediately; in the mean time, I gave my poor patient a medicine which proved a temporary relief to her. " I'm better," exclaimed ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe could ſpeak, " and ſhould be quite well ſoon, Mrs. Maitland, if you would tell Mr. Courtland not to afflict himſelf thus."—He caught her to his boſom—" Not afflict myſelf, my ſweet love, when I ſee all that is dear to me on earth thus exquiſitely tortured!"

" You muſt be leſs kind," ſaid ſhe, ſpeaking with great difficulty, " or I ſhall find

find it very hard to be juſt.—Mrs. Maitland, leſt I ſhould grow worſe, and not be able to ſay all I wiſh to Mr. Courtland, ſhall I beg the favour of you to quit the room a few minutes? It is his ſecret, and therefore I have no right to make it known to another."—I was going, when, extending her feeble arms, ſhe threw them round my neck—" Let me ſuppoſe you for a while my mother," ſaid ſhe, " and grant me the tender ſatisfaction of weeping on your boſom."——I kiſſed her cheek, ſaid I could not acknowledge her for my daughter, unleſs ſhe promiſed to obey my commands, by ſpeaking comfort to your poor brother.—I held her thus for near a quarter of an hour; ſhe ſeemed inwardly convulſed, and her reſpiration was effected with great difficulty. At length, raiſing her head, ſhe ſaid, I might leave her, for the great ſtruggle of life was over with her now, ſince ſhe had obliged juſtice to triumph over affection; " but tell your friend here not to afflict himſelf, for all I intend is good to him."

" But ſurely then, my deareſt girl," ſaid I, " you make uſe of the moſt painful expedients to effect it; I am ſenſible it is not in your power to make Mr. Courtland happy, unleſs you are ſo yourſelf: am I not right, Sir?"

He

He thanked me for expreſſing what he could not find words to utter. "But tell my ſweet love," cried he, "ſince nothing I can ſay can gain credit with her, that the anguiſh ſhe has this day planted in my boſom, though it be nouriſhed in ſilence, the ſad remembrance of it ſhall hourly ring ſuch changes on my feelings, as to make them indifferent to every ſenſation of joy; and ſince you are reſolved to exclude me from all the dear domeſtic ſcenes of life, by withholding from me your love, my boſom ſhall never admit conſolation from any other. With you, my ſweet Emmeline, my happineſs firſt began, and here, remember, it ends for ever."

This he ſaid with more energy than he was aware of; ſhe ſeemed to ſtart at his violence. Then taking his hand, while ſhe gaſped with great difficulty for breath——

"No, Mr. Courtland," ſaid ſhe, "it is not I who have robbed you of happineſs, for I am a very bankrupt of it; it will not grow about my poor heart; ſorrows only ſpring up there, and twine ſo cloſely about it, that comfort more ſhall never find an entrance into it—Mrs. Maitland, now will you leave us?"

I was

I was going, when Mr. Courtland held my arm, requeſting my ſtay, ſaying, if it were his ſecret only ſhe had to divulge, he had no wiſh it ſhould be concealed from me.

" Then Sir," ſaid ſhe, " the ſooner I ſnatch a ſerpent from my boſom, the better;" taking a letter from it, which ſhe preſented him, only ſaying, " Sir, do you know this hand-writing?"

He glanced it over—" Do I know it?—Great heaven!" exclaimed he, " Yes, and acknowledge it to be my own; but nothing leſs than a fiend of hell, a jealous woman, could have conveyed it to my deareſt Emmeline. You ſee it bears no date; yet I truſt you will believe me, when I aſſure you (with that truth I muſt anſwer one day at the final audit of the world, for all my ſins), it was written nearly three years ago; and if you have peruſed it with attention, you will ſee it was dictated by compaſſion only, not love."

This was the letter Mr. Montroſe mentions that your brother wrote the Marchioneſs, on hearing that her father, to glut his ambition, was going to ſacrifice her to the man ſhe hated. As well as I can recollect, this was the ſubſtance of it:

" The thouſand tender proofs you have given me, deareſt Vilette, of your affection

affection for me, make me ſeverely feel the anguiſh of your mind; rather than ſee you for ever miſerable, diſpoſe as you pleaſe of the hand and fortune of

H. COURTLAND."

"If you ſtill have doubts, my deareſt love," continued he, "of the integrity of my conduct, Mrs. Maitland can inform you of all that has paſſed between the Marchioneſs and me ſince my coming to London. O pity my ſuſpenſe, and beſtow on me the cordial look of comfort, though you will not condeſcend to ſpeak to me."

She threw up her eyes, but they looked like thoſe of a perſon ſtruggling in the convulſive pangs of death; ſhe appeared much contracted on her left ſide, where lay the principal ſeat of her pain. Your brother ſeemed ſtupid, paſt all ſenſation; and had ſhe wanted aſſiſtance, ſhe might have died, for he was unable to offer it her, till I told him I thought ſhe would breathe with leſs difficulty if ſhe were raiſed a little: gentle as was the effort he made, ſhe fainted with exceſs of pain; her head reſted on his boſom, while I made uſe of a variety of means to recover her. When ſhe was enough recovered to be ſenſible of her ſituation, ſhe would have withdrawn herſelf from him.—"No,

my

my love," ſaid he, tenderly kiſſing her, "if you muſt die, it ſhall be in theſe arms—we ſhall ſoon quit a life of pain together; we ſhall ſoon be beyond the reach of malice or the aſſaults of miſery."

His tears fell on her palid cheek, ſhe looked at him, laid her hand on his eyes, and feebly exclaimed, "Ah, Mrs. Maitland! what do I ſee? Whatever becomes of me, never let me ſee tears again ſtream from my dear Mr. Courtland's eyes, for they are more afflicting to me than any pain I can ſuffer—but tell me, Mrs. Maitland, Was that vile letter only ſent then to make me wretched?"

For no other purpoſe, I told her.

"Then won't you entreat," cried ſhe, "the beſt of men to forgive me the anxiety I have occaſioned him?"

"From this moment, my beſt love," ſaid he, tenderly embracing her, "let it never more be thought on, if you are ſatisfied."

Here doctor Frampton arrived, and not a little aſtoniſhed to ſee the progreſs his patient's diſorder had made ſince the morning; he now pronounced her diſorder to be a pleuriſy in her ſide, brought on, no doubt, by the agitation of her ſpirits. A ſurgeon was called in; ſhe was inſtantly bled, your brother ſupporting her

her during the operation, after which he delivered her up to the females, who conveyed her to bed, where ſhe underwent a ſevere bliſtering; but this I took care ſhould be kept a ſecret from your brother. I returned to him after I had ſeen every thing properly done for his Emmeline.

"You are come now," ſaid he, "to tell me ſhe is dead; but don't tell me ſo, let me be deceived a little longer. I know what I can—and what I cannot bear."

I told him, "I hoped his fears were groundleſs, that bleeding ſeemed to have had a happy effect upon her, that ſhe appeared more compoſed, and was endeavouring to reſt."

He looked ſo pleaſed, and ſo thankful—I then reminded him it was ſeven o'clock, and he had taken no refreſhment all day; that dinner had been ſet on table two hours before, though not the leaſt attention had been paid to it.

Though I dragged him down ſtairs almoſt by force, yet he looked as if he wiſhed to oblige me. As it grew late, I found he became extremely reſtleſs, though I informed him every half hour, that I hoped things would mend by the morning; at length, with a good deal of heſitation, he aſked me to grant him one favour more, though he feared to aſk it.

I bid

I bid him name it.

"It is then," ſaid he, "that you will ſuffer me to ſit the remaining part of the night in this room; as my mind will be much eaſier here, than at my own houſe."

I could not help ſmiling at the oddity of his requeſt; I told him ſo, and apologized to him for my inattention, as I had ordered a bed to be prepared for him, though I had really forgotten to mention it.

For ſeveral ſucceeding days there was very little appearance of poor Emmeline's amendment, ſpight of the tender aſſiduities of her lover, or the ſkill of her phyſicians—Nature at length ſeems to be making an effort in her favour, and I hope ſoon to inform you, that ſhe is quite out of danger.

Where is this tardy Sir William Falkner; when does he mean to ſquire you to town?

My kind compliments to the General, and tell him, ſhould Emmeline ſpeedily recover ſtrength, he muſt not be ſurpriſed if his ſon ſhould take her an airing to Gretna Green, if he does not make haſte to amuſe him here with a wife.—Adieu.

M. MAITLAND.

LETTER XII.

H. Courtland, *Eſq. to the Marchioneſs* de Beaulieu.

MADAM, Great Ormond Street.

NOT to rob you of the ſatisfaction of knowing that the arrows of your malice have wounded moſt effectually, I take the firſt opportunity to inform you of their ſucceſs. *Your* preſent cruelty I hope will acquit *me* of my paſt follies.—My letter written ſo many years ſince, which you ſo ingeniouſly conveyed to my *adored* Miſs Ackworth, has had all the effect upon her you could wiſh—As it can be of no further uſe to her, ſhe has begged the favour of me to incloſe it to your Ladyſhip. I have the honour to remain, Madam, your much obliged, and moſt obedient humble ſervant.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XIII.

H. Courtland, *Eſq.* *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq.*

DEAR GEORGE,

I THINK 'tis full three weeks ſince I wrote laſt, and in that time I have experienced more pain, and pleaſure, than half the drowſy ſons of mortality will in a life-time. When I concluded my laſt, my chaiſe was at the door, to carry me for a few days to Lord William Frankley's, who has a ſmall ſeat a few miles out of town; he was preſent, when the ſurgeon who attended me propoſed my making a ſhort tour previous to my ſetting off for Roſelands.

I would gladly have declined this viſit, as the houſe is always full of company. Lady Bell Cardiff, his Lordſhip's ſiſter, though a very pretty woman, is very agreeable alſo; and, though a woman of quality, looks upon her fellow-creatures to be made of the ſame materials with herſelf, whatever be their rank in life. Amongſt other company, to my mortal diſquiet, I found Satan's prime engines of miſchief, Lady Auguſta Finleigh, and Vilette Marchioneſs de Beaulieu, brimful

brimful of love and paſſion, the flames of which I gradually checked, by ſprinkling them with the freezing waters of indifference, without appearing openly negligent or deliberately rude; though I owed her a mortal grudge, for the tender moments of which her raſhneſs had deprived me of paſſing with the beloved of my heart, to whom, by the bye, I had written the firſt moment I was able, to entreat her pardon for my long ſilence, telling her the real cauſe, now the danger was removed.

Lady Auguſta behaved towards me as uſual, covering the malignancy of her heart under the ſpecious maſk of vivacity. She made a thouſand efforts to leave me alone with the Marchioneſs, but I learnt a little of their cunning, and ſo foiled them both: as I was diſabled by my arm from entering into any of their diverſions, it ſaved me the trouble of offering them a thouſand little gallantries, which muſt neceſſarily have followed, had dancing, or any of the Chriſtmas *etceteras*, taken place.

As I really grew better from breathing a purer atmoſphere, I took a polite leave of Lord William and his agreeable ſiſter, and returned to town, intending to ſet out for Roſelands the next morning, when

when I found a note from Mrs. Maitland which had been delivered two days ſince, requeſting to ſee me immediately.

As ſoon as I thought her viſible the next morning, I haſtened to her with a heart bounding with impatience for intelligence of my loved Emmeline; but here, George, my feelings received the deadlieſt blow that was ever meditated againſt a human breaſt, and given me too by the ſweeteſt ſufferer that ever human clay embodied.—I have not leiſure now to recount particulars; ſuffice it to ſay, I found her extremely ill: added to her bodily diſeaſe, ſhe had to endure that of the mind alſo; for, ſome time before ſhe left Roſelands, ſhe received the following note, with the fooliſh offer of marriage incloſed in it, which I once ſent the Marchioneſs, on hearing that her father intended to make her a ſacrifice to his ambition. The letter from the unknown perſon was dictated as follows:

"Madam,

"In juſtice to thoſe virtues I have heard ſo loudly commended in you, I ſend you the incloſed; it matters not how it came into my hands; if it ſhould reach you in time to prevent your giving your hand to a man who has made an offering of himſelf elſewhere, I ſhall eſteem my-

ſelf happy, having had it in my power to ſerve a lady of ſuch diſtinguiſhed merit. I am, Madam, &c. &c.

M. D."

This curſed packet was delivered into my angel's hands unobſerved by any of the family.—When ſhe had read it, ſhe depoſited the horrid contents in her boſom, after which, ſhe became a prey to ſilent ſorrow, the cauſe of which could be gueſſed at by no one.

Thank you, dear Montroſe, for the juſtice you did my conduct in your letters to my father; it ſo entirely met with his approbation, that he hurried his Emmeline to town, hoping it might produce an eclairciſſement.—Now George, if you can tell me what ſenſation is like when hope has deſerted the boſom, you may be able to form ſome idea of the conflicts of mine, when my ſuffering angel gave up the fatal letters as mentioned above; and what ſhe felt on finding I had held my faith and honour to her inviolate, 'tis paſt all language to expreſs—it was followed by a ſenſation ſo exquiſitely keen, that it had nearly cut off the thread of her exiſtence: and for a long time, I had not the leaſt idea, but that I preſſed to my torn boſom my Emmeline's breathleſs clay. But Mrs. Maitland's more than maternal

tenderneſs has been the bleſſed inſtrument, under heaven, of preſerving *her* life and *my* reaſon.

Had ſhe ſuffered leſs, I ſhould hardly regret the pain I have endured, for otherwiſe I could have never known how tenderly I am beloved.

I can ſcarcely bring myſelf yet to believe ſhe is out of danger; her cough is ſtill violent, and the pain in her ſide attended with ſtrong feveriſh ſymptoms—her father and mother both dying of conſumptions, make her caſe the more alarming; and it is thought too early in the ſeaſon for her to drink the Briſtol waters.

Marry a Frenchwoman, Montroſe! No, Devil fetch me if I would, though it were to place me on the throne of Louis, and his Holineſs the Pope would grant me abſolution for the indulgence of every darling ſin, and his cardinals were to ſay maſſes after my death to releaſe my departed ſpirit from the gloomy manſions of purgatory!——Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XIV.

Miſs Courtland *to Mrs.* Maitland.

DEAR MADAM, Roſelands.

IN anſwer to your long and dolorous letter, I can only ſay it was wetted with my tears, and has opened in my boſom a freſh ſource of thankfulneſs for the mercies ſo lately received.

My amiable Falkner—how kindly has he participated in the general diſtreſs! how ardently has he ſtrove to make the remembrance of it leſs painful to me! As he almoſt lives here, I think I may venture to conclude him one of the family.

My father ſends you his kind compliments, and requeſts that you will take the entire charge of his children, till he ſees you. Now in order to ſecure them from further dangers, it is ſettled by the junto here, that you immediately procure for each a nurſery maid, that they may never get out of ſight, leſt new miſchiefs ſhould befal them; and that you alſo purchaſe for each child a new ſet of leading-ſtrings; that you alſo take particular care that the boy's be made ſtrong, as he is of a reſtive

reſtive temper, and at every little oppoſition to his inclination I know will attempt to break looſe—as to the girl, ſhe is of a much milder diſpoſition, though at times is apt to be very ſulky, and would ſooner ſob till her heart breaks, than tell what makes it ache. As to whiſtles and bells, we think them an expence which may be diſpenſed with; for if you put them to play together, they will divert themſelves with their own muſic.—My father purpoſes, when he comes to town in about a fortnight, to get them yoked together, for perhaps, he ſays, they may draw the better from wearing the ſame harneſs: as they have been ſo very reſtive of late, their prancings and curvettings have given their friends a world of anxiety.

My Sir William too will be talking of yokes and harneſſes, and of drawing together; and I aſſure you, preſuming upon indulgence, he already dictates with the authority of a huſband.

My father deſires me to add, that if his boy behaves well, you may give him a few ſhillings, and take him to a toy-ſhop to purchaſe a ring for my little ſiſter, as it will be neceſſary to ſecure the yoke ſhe is ſoon to put on; but you are not to compel him to do this, if it does not meet

with his entire approbation, as my father would not always have his inclinations thwarted.

He ſends a bleſſing to each child, to which I add my beſt love. Adieu.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER XV.

Mr. Courtland *to Miſs* Courtland.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I AM ſo much in favour with Mrs. Maitland for my dutiful behaviour towards her, that ſhe has granted me the pleaſure of anſwering your laſt letter to her, as it contains ſome things which relate to myſelf.

Pray preſent my beſt duty to my papa, and tell him I am grown ſo good a boy, that I am reſolved in future to comply with all his wiſhes; for on receiving the word of command, I went immediately to buy the little gold ring he mentions; but I paid for it out of my own pocket-money; and deſired Mrs. Maitland to make a preſent to Miſs Emmeline of that which my papa deſired ſhe ſhould give me

me to purchaſe it with; and be ſure tell my papa, I have taken mightily to my book ſince I hear he is coming to town ſo ſoon; and have learnt already every word of the leſſon he intends I ſhould repeat; I want Miſs Emmeline to ſtudy it with me, but ſhe is refractory, and throws aſide the book, ſaying, ſhe will riſk her credit entirely on the aſſiduity of the prompter: but, poor child! knowing the prize will be adjudged to me, ſhe has not the leaſt pride or emulation to contend with me.

The leading-ſtrings you mention I ſhall be content to wear for life, provided Miſs Emmeline promiſes to lead me about: we take at length ſuch prudent care of ourſelves, that Mrs. Maitland thinks we ſha'n't want nurſery maids, at leaſt for a time.

I forgot to tell you, ſiſter, that in coming to town I bought a fine baby-houſe for Miſs Emmeline in Berkley-ſquare, that coſt ſome thouſands of pounds; for it is much larger than baby-houſes in general are; and ſo I ſet people to adorn it, and fringe it, and trim it, in ſuch manner as miſſes generally like, when they grow too tall for bibs and aprons: and when that was done, I ordered it to be ſtored with ſweetmeats, and cakes, and oranges, and roſes, and jonquils; be-

cauſe I heard Miſs Emmeline ſay one day, that a winter's noſegay was worth more than a caſket of jewels;—*à-propos* of jewels—I bought ſome for Miſs Emmeline to adorn her hair and boſom, for I have heard ſay, that ladies were fond of ſuch baubles; but they gave her no ſort of pleaſure; however, on further examining the caſket ſhe found ſomething that did; there was a ſmall picture lay at the bottom of it, very like your brother Harry; ſhe ſurveyed it for ſome time with eyes of love, then kiſſed it again and again, upon which your brother grew very jealous, and very angry, ſnatched the picture from her, and ſtole as many kiſſes from her lips as ſhe had beſtowed on his likeneſs; but a terrible quarrel was the conſequence of this unexpected rudeneſs, and he vowed never to reſtore the picture to her, till ſhe promiſed to forgive him.

Miſs Emmeline has been very ſickly of late, but thank God ſhe is much better; and Mrs. Maitland will force her abroad ſometimes, to lay out the preſent of money which my papa ſent her to buy ribbons, and feathers, and fineries, againſt he comes to town; but ſhe does not take ſuch delight in thoſe kinds of things as I have ſeen other little miſſes of her age, becauſe ſhe had rather feed miſery than indulge vanity;

ty; and ſhe is more pleaſed when your Harry pays one compliment to her heart, than a thouſand to her perſon. She joins with me in beſt duty to our papa, and love to all friends, particularly Sir William Falkner; and begs to know when he intends to ſend her a piece of wedding cake, and ſhould be much obliged to you, ſiſter, if you could get from him, how long it will be before ſhe may expect it. Farewell my good ſiſter, and believe me your ever loving brother till death.

HARRY COURTLAND.

LETTER XVI.

H. Courtland, *Eſq*; *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq*.

MY DEAR MONTROSE,

CAN'T you be in town within a fortnight? Can you ſay you love me, and yet refuſe to witneſs the moſt exquiſite happineſs mortal man yet was ever fated to enjoy? All on my part is concluded againſt the day of days.

My ſweet Emmeline is much recovered, though nothing but time can reſtore the charming bloom to her cheek which her

cruel malady has devoured; 'tis impoſſible to ſay how refined her tenderneſs is, or to what exceſs ſhe loves me; ſhe is all apprehenſion when I am abſent, all ſweet complacency when preſent.

I never hinted to her a ſyllable of my new houſe in Berkley-ſquare till it was nearly finiſhed; and wiſhing to obtain her ſentiments of thoſe apartments which will be more immediately appropriated to her own uſe, Mrs. Maitland invented a ſtratagem to get at them without a diſcovery.

I was to breakfaſt in Soho-ſquare, after which, Mrs. Maitland was to propoſe an airing in her coach to Hyde Park—we ſet off as we had agreed. Paſſing through Berkley-ſquare, Mrs. Maitland ſaid, if it would not break in too much upon my time, ſhe wiſhed to ſtop to ſee a friend's houſe which was newly furniſhing; we aſſented to her propoſal.

As I handed my ſweet Emmeline into the houſe, I confeſs my emotions were ſo violent I could not keep them under the leaſt ſubjection; ſhe took notice of the hurry of my ſpirits, and aſked the cauſe.

"Pooh, pooh," ſaid Mrs. Maitland, "we came hither to ſee what furniture is moſt faſhionable, not to look after flutters and throbs, and emotions, and ſuch ſilly ſtuff."—As we paſſed through all the viſiting

viſiting apartments, do you know, the little ill-natured critic found fault with the whole?—Mrs. Maitland ſaid, ſhe had no right to cenſure unleſs ſhe would promiſe to amend; "but where lies the fault?"—"The whole," ſaid ſhe, "ſeems much too grand for happineſs; an humble religious mind can receive no ſatiſfaction from gilded hangings, painted cielings, or ſplendid furniture."

"But you don't conſider, my dear, this houſe is fitted up for people of faſhion, and there are few of them who know any more what an humble ſpirit means, than they do what it is to poſſeſs a religious mind."

"No wonder then," ſaid ſhe, "we ſee the progreſs of vice ſo rapid, when it becomes the only purſuit of life."

"Well child," interrupted Mrs. Maitland, "we did not come here to preach, but to prate; yet after all, I hope you approve of my friend's taſte."

She ſaid, "Every thing here ſeems to be beautifully arranged, and perfectly ſuited to each other; I only think it is too ſplendid for happineſs; for happineſs courts the ſhade, and, like virtue, flouriſhes beſt in retirement."

"It is not," replied Mrs. Maitland, "that my friend is at all fond of finery; he does it in hopes to pleaſe his intended wife, of whom he is extremely fond."

"Poor man! then," rejoined my dear girl, "I do pity him; for he has but a ſlender chance for happineſs whoſe wife can be pleaſed with the ſplendour of a drawing room, and he preſent." She further added, ſhe thought a woman muſt feel herſelf of vaſt importance, who could aſſume courage to receive ſo great a number of viſitants as would crowd ſuch a ſuite of apartments.

"I have ſeen the lady," ſaid I; "and of all the women I know, ſhe aſſumes the leaſt importance; yet her manners are ſo collected, ſo mild, and ſo eaſy, that a connoiſſeur would yield the palm of good breeding to her in preference to moſt of our women of quality, who nightly ſport their factitious graces and confident ſtares in all the public places."

When we had traverſed the principal rooms, I ſtumbled, as if by accident, upon one I had fitted up in the exact ſtile I had often heard her deſcribe, which I intended as a kind of morning room, and in which I had ordered a little repaſt to be ſet out, ornamented with fruits and flowers. I confeſs I ſhould have felt diſappointed, had not my dear Emmeline done juſtice to my deſire of pleaſing her; ſhe expreſſed the fulleſt approbation of all ſhe ſaw: "This room," ſaid ſhe, "is my delight; it is not too ſplendid for comfort,

comfort, or too full of ornament for uſe; one could ſoon fancy one's ſelf at home here; but let us be gone, for you ſee, by this elegant repaſt, that company is expected."

"No company ever can come into this room," ſaid I, "that ſhall oblige my dear Emmeline to quit it; it is your's, and every thing in it, except Mrs. Maitland, whom I have not the liberty to diſpoſe of; and therefore I beg, that with your uſual hoſpitality you will invite her to partake of your entertainment," tenderly embracing her.

She was ſo aſtoniſhed, ſo confuſed, and ſo fluttered, ſhe knew not what to ſay or do.

However, ſeating her, I ſaid, I remembered the firſt preſent ſhe ever made me on my arrival at Roſelands was a noſegay. I was now pleaſed at having it in my power to return her the ſame favour in Berkley-ſquare, though the flowers were not, like her's, of my own cultivating—preſenting her a large bouquet.

In return for my favour, ſhe ſaid, I was an artful hypocrite; for whenever I wanted to bribe her, I generally tempted with a noſegay, knowing how little able ſhe was to reſiſt a temptation ſo alluring—placing them in her boſom.

We ſpent a charming hour there, which gave me a rich foretaſte of my future happineſs;

pineſs; yet, George, I am no ſooner alone, than ſuch an oppreſſion hangs over my ſpirits, that I feel a burden to myſelf; a ſomething I cannot account for ruſhes through my boſom, and ſhivers every nerve; but you will ſay again, I have a moſt ingenious faculty of tormenting myſelf.

Poor Sir Richard Carlton, provoked at the loſs of his handſome wife, which is greatly aggravated by the debts ſhe has contracted, fell into ſuch a fit of rage and deſpair on hearing of her elopement, that it brought on the gout in his ſtomach, of which he expired not long ſince. Whether Sir Charles Willoughby will fulfil his promiſe to my lady, and marry her, time alone will prove.

I ſhall hardly be able to write again, till I ſtyle myſelf the happieſt of huſbands, as well as your ſincere friend.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XVII.

To the Same.

Soho Square.

ANY other evil than the preſent, my friend, I think I could have borne—yet I do not arraign the awards of Providence,

vidence, I will only pray that I may learn ſubmiſſion to its decrees.

How uncertain is the ſtate of man!—but yeſterday—ah, Montroſe—how gay were my proſpects—my felicity was as perfect as falls to the lot of humanity—but adverſe winds have blown a deadly blaſt—blighted all my promiſed joys—and left my boſom deſolate of hope.

Dare I venture to relate the ſorrows of my ſoul? Can I paint a ſcene at which my nature ſhudders?—My brain is on fire! how then can I deſcribe to you the fatal cauſe which has kindled the blaze!—No, I cannot—I muſt lay down my pen.

I will make another effort to proceed, however my feelings revolt at the thought; the tempeſt of grief beats hard on my ſhattered ſenſes—there is no room for thinking—my ſight fails me too—the pen drops from my fingers.

Again I take it up—My recollection is gone—O that I could ſhut it out for ever, with all its train of horrid images—but here I have it again; it will attend me while I trace calamity to its ſource; it ſhews me the duration of miſery on this ſide eternity.

How

How early in life have I ſeen all the enjoyments of it annihilated!—My father, what will you ſay to be bereft of your child?—My ſiſter too, who ſhall dry your tears?—Expect not the tender conſolation from your brother—his feelings are too highly wrought for ſympathy, they are all deſpair!

Where—ah! where are all the gay viſions that ſo lately ſported about my imagination? gone, ah! with whom?—all gone, with my departed love!

O what a pang was there!—it writhes my ſoul—I ſtruggle to hold her to my boſom, I embrace only a ſhadow! And O if her little lamp of life be not totally extinguiſhed, preſerve her Heaven from the hand of violence, and ſnatch her ſpotleſs ſoul to realms of endleſs peace—I have loſt my Emmeline, ſhe is dead to me, ſo is all creation beſides.

Laſt night then, about twelve o'clock, one of Mrs. Maitland's ſervants came to know if I had been viſiting any where with Emmeline; for ſhe was much alarmed to find ſhe ſtaid out ſo late, as ſhe had not been ſeen at home ſince I left her in the morning.

I got to Mrs. Maitland's with much difficulty, for the ſtreets were ſo filled with a heavy fall of ſnow, as to render them almoſt

almoſt impaſſable. When ſhe ſaw me alone, ſhe felt a *preſentiment* of ſomething dreadful. The ſervants were all called up and interrogated, but not the leaſt information could be procured. Mrs. Maitland had ſpent the day with a ſick friend, and did not return before eleven o'clock; but finding my angel had left the houſe about noon, concluded that I muſt have prevailed on her to ſpend the day amongſt ſome of my friends, though ſhe thought it very extraordinary.

At length it ſtruck me, that ſhe muſt have dropped down dead in her apartment. —I flew thither, but found no veſtige of her—I heard the church clock ſtrike two; in a fit of deſpair I fell on the ground—I continued in agony till, ſtarting up, I ran down ſtairs into the ſtreets with no hat upon my head; it was ſoon covered with ſnow, which continued to fall in great abundance—the men ſervants purſued me, and dragged me back by force. I ſaw Mrs. Maitland in fits, I was ſeized with dreadful ſhiverings; the poor girls who attended their miſtreſs, were drowned in tears: I aſked them why they wept, then ſaid their ſorrows were pleaſing to me—yet I could not weep.

It is now nine in the morning; thus has hour ſucceeded hour, but my ſorrows

rows ſtill remain—I am ſick at heart—I was not born, Montroſe, to meet great evils with firmneſs—I am a poor puſillanimous wretch, enervated by too much proſperity. In my dream of vanity, I never once imagined calamity could overtake me.

Never more, Montroſe, ſhall my lamentations reach thy friendly boſom: I have reaſon to think my Emmeline is ſafe—but I muſt learn to forget her. Ah! how fondly have I loved her! I thought my tenderneſs returned. Could ere deceit dwell in ſo fair a manſion?—Where art thou, bright image of my faireſt hopes! What, not one fond regret at leaving me, for all my vaſt exceſs of paſſion!—Why didſt thou ſeek to charm my ſoul with thy excellencies, and then leave me for ever to mourn their loſs? yes, I will for ever mourn, till the grave ſhall ſilence the remembrance of them.

But whither do I ramble!—

Sitting in her dreſſing room, with my fellow mourner Mrs. Maitland, and leaning my head on my Emmeline's writing deſk, it ſlipped from me, and I diſcovered a card under it, written as follows: "Sir George Warren is happy with the privilege Miſs Ackworth has granted him to wait on her at half paſt twelve; he will be

be certain not to out-ſtay her appointment."

Upon deſcribing him to the ſervants, we found he had been here; that he ſtaid not long, and Miſs Ackworth received him with her hat and cloak on, but they all aver they did not leave the houſe together.

Further conjecture ſeems to be at an end; I feel myſelf quite exhauſted in body and mind.

Midnight again returns—but alas! ſleep viſits not the afflicted.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XVIII.

To the Same in Continuation.

ALL things paſs away, my friend; but the anguiſh which twines itſelf about the ſoul is ſtationary. Mrs. Maitland is more than a mother to me. My ſpirit is broken—yet nature ſtill ſurvives! Wilſon weeps over his maſter, his honeſt tears are tender tributes of affection.

I have had freſh embarraſſments, and thoſe of the moſt painful kind; I have been

been obliged to viſit the Marchioneſs; but if it has been the means of ſaving her life, my humanity has not been exerted in vain. What a ſpectacle of human infirmity did ſhe preſent to me! She was lying on a ſofa in a looſe kind of diſhabille of white ſattin, with a black veil ſpread over her face, which Mademoiſelle Linon drew aſide on my entering; but, good Heavens! how was ſhe changed!—her bright eyes ſeemed obſcured by a glaſſy film, her cheeks were ſunk, her figure much emaciated, and her voice inarticulate.

She told me, that believing her final hour was approaching, ſhe could not quit life till ſhe had made herſelf appear leſs culpable in my eyes, than I believed her: that ſhe was entirely ignorant that my former letter to her had ever been ſent to Miſs Ackworth; that Lady Auguſta Finleigh, having ſurpriſed her one day reading, muſt have purloined it, as ſhe could never find it after ſhe left her. "I have been the cauſe of much vexation to you, Courtland," added ſhe, "for which I ſincerely aſk your pardon—With you, life would have been a bleſſing—without you, it is not worth the purchaſe. Do juſtice to my reputation, and let not my name be hateful to you.—May the tender aſſiduities

duities of your amiable Miſs Ackworth guard your boſom from all future inquietudes to the laſt period of your exiſtence! And, when the awful moment comes, God grant that a broken heart may not be added to the common decays of nature!—But why is your face clouded with ſorrow?"

"Becauſe my heart, Madam, is burſting with anguiſh."—"You can have no cauſe for grief," added ſhe, "who love and are beloved; but I fall a victim to an imprudent paſſion. When I am dead, you will find that I have made you maſter of as much of my fortune as I could diſpoſe of.—Monſieur Marſin's perſecution has injured my health, and has been a principal means of reducing me to my preſent weak ſtate. I have no deſire to live, for I have no friend to protect me againſt his violence. I can ſee no refuge from ſorrow but in death; and now 'tis welcome." With a ſigh ſhe ceaſed to breathe.

I really thought her expired; but Mademoiſelle Linon ſaid, that ſhe had frequent returns of fainting fits; ſhe gave her a cordial which revived her.

As ſoon as I thought ſhe could comprehend me, I urged her to haſten to make an alteration in her will, for I never could receive the leaſt part of her fortune;

tune; but in return for her generoſity, if ſhe would promiſe to live, I would make a vow never to marry, if it would afford her the leaſt conſolation: for I was already ſo deeply involved in miſery, that death was the only bleſſing I begged of Heaven to grant me. And now adieu for ever!—I was going, when ſhe held out her hand. I took it. "You forgive me then," ſaid ſhe, "for all the anguiſh I have cauſed you in conſequence of that unhappy letter, as I had no ſhare in the guilt?—The cruel note I received from you, wherein you incloſed it, Mademoiſelle Linon will find at my heart when I am dead. And now I think," ſaid ſhe, "the buſineſs of life is over, though not the ſtruggles of it.—But did you ſay you vowed never to marry?"

"I did, Madam; and here again repeat it; for I have loſt all that endeared life to me. Live, Madam; do not ſuffer yourſelf to be a prey to the violence of Monſieur Marſin's behaviour: the laws of this country will protect you; my family alſo will protect you, howſoever the wrath of Heaven ſhall diſpoſe of me."

Not to ſink beneath the terrors of my mind before her, I ruſhed into the coach which had been waiting for me. I no ſooner reached Mrs. Maitland's, than

Wilſon

Wilſon came running into the room, ſaying he had juſt ſeen Sir George Warren go into the Bedford coffee-houſe; I drove thither with a boſom panting with revenge, firſt ſlipping a brace of piſtols into my pocket.—But, Great God, I thank thee, that in the moment of phrenzy thou unnervedſt my arm, and ſaved me from the ſin of murder!—

I found Sir George tranquilly ſipping his chocolate. I did not give him time to ſpeak before I put a piſtol in his hand, bidding him defend himſelf.

"Pſha! Courtland," cried he; "I never riſk my life till I know if the cauſe be worthy of it—Upon my ſoul, by the wild diſtraction of your looks, you appear much fitter for the hands of a phyſician than to play the part of a duelliſt."

"Not to waſte time in words," ſaid I, "you have injured my honour—baſely ſtolen my Emmeline from me—corrupted her pure ſoul—and now there is no method left but this (preſenting my piſtol) to wipe out the infamy."——The piſtol dropped from my trembling hand—I grew giddy, and ſunk into a chair.

Sir George, inſtead of being provoked at my behaviour, ſupported me in his arms.

"Thank

"Thank God, my dear Courtland," cried he, "my paſſions are at preſent leſs irritable than yours. As to Miſs Ackworth, by all that's ſacred I know nothing of her; I ſaw her two days ſince, about half an hour after you left her, and now intended to call upon her whe͂n I had drank my chocolate: in the mean time I have called twice at your houſe, but found you had not been at home."

I then told him all that had paſſed—he was ſhocked to the ſoul:—then attended me to Mrs. Maitland's. "Ah! Madam," exclaimed I, on ſeeing her, "I bleſs God you do not receive a murderer."

At that inſtant, my adored Emmeline ran into my arms, to all appearance in perfect health. The raſh vow I had juſt made, ruſhed upon my ſoul. What happened afterwards I know not; I was a long time loſt to every ſenſe of feeling.—O when, Montroſe, ſhall my heart know reſt?——Adieu.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XIX.

Lady Auguſta Finleigh *to Miſs* Herbert.

WHAT has the perpetrator of mean actions to expect, but ſhame, contempt, and obloquy?

My folly, when publicly known, will leave me without a friend: the plan of miſchief I had laid for a farce, may prove a tragedy in its cataſtrophe. The Marchioneſs is at the point of death, owing to the ſnares into which my imprudence has led her: ſhe has expoſed me to Courtland; and he, to all the world: for whoſe inſolent contempt of me I had ſecretly vowed a complete revenge—by ſtabbing *his* peace who had murdered *mine*; when fortune favoured my plan beyond my wiſhes.

Some days ago Lady Bell Cardiff called on me to take an airing with her; we ſtopped at the door of a perfume-ſhop in the neighbourhood of Soho-ſquare, when who ſhould I ſee in it but Miſs Ackworth, and unattended, quite unſuſpecting of the trick I had played her before, in ſending her the anonymous letter to Roſelands, in which I incloſed Court-

land's letter to the Marchioneſs, which had brought her to the jaws of death, from whence ſhe was but juſt eſcaped.—Lady Bell, who was deſirous of being introduced to her, ſaid we had better alight. The ceremony of introduction being over, I aſked Miſs Ackworth if ſhe would not take an airing with us? She excuſed herſelf for ſome time; but Lady Bell adding her intreaties to mine, ſhe at length conſented, but ſaid ſhe muſt leave word, as ſhe paſſed Mrs. Maitland's door, where ſhe was going. At that inſtant a ſervant of Mrs. Maitland's came into the ſhop, who had formerly lived in our family, till my brother found out ſhe was pretty, and then laid a ſcheme to ſeduce her. I had employed her before on ſecret ſervices, and found her faithful, whenever there was money to ſilence the qualms of her conſcience. I told her, I would make her a handſome preſent if ſhe would deny to Mrs. Maitland having ſeen Miſs Ackworth go out in a carriage with Lady Bell Cardiff and me, and to keep herſelf on the watch till ſhe ſhould hear further from me.

Theſe preliminaries ſettled, I joined the Ladies, ſaid I had made my purchaſes, and aſked if they had done the ſame; to which they anſwered in the affirmative.

Miſs

Miſs Ackworth then told Lady Bell, ſhe would ſpare her the trouble of calling at Mrs. Maitland's, as ſhe could ſend a meſſage by her ſervant, for ſhe was not to be at home before evening. When we got to the top of Piccadilly, I told Lady Bell I thought ſhe might take us down to Cardiff Lodge, as we could return with eaſe by five o'clock to dinner. Miſs Ackworth I ſaw did not approve my plan; but I ſaid the houſe and gardens were ſo highly eſteemed by Mr. Courtland, that, in complaiſance to his taſte, ſhe muſt not think the ride too long.—She ſaid, ſhe had heard much of their beauty from Mr. Courtland, but much more of their agreeable poſſeſſor, to whom he had promiſed to introduce her.

Lady Bell, who is a violent admirer of Courtland, looked pleaſed at the compliment. We went on chatting upon different ſubjects, without attending to the clouds that were collecting, and for a mile before we reached the Lodge, there fell ſuch a quantity of ſnow, that the air was almoſt darkened with it. We ſtaid an hour and half, expecting every moment that its violence would abate; but it grew infinitely worſe. As the evening approached, the wind blew furiouſly. Lady Bell gave orders for our returning, after we had

partaken of ſome refreſhments; but the poſtillions ſent up to ſay their horſes could not ſtir, the roads, on account of the great fall of ſnow, being rendered totally impaſſable.

In this dilemma Lady Bell propoſed we ſhould write the ſtory of our detention to our reſpective friends, and ſhe would diſpatch a careful meſſenger with our letters; to which Miſs Ackworth gladly aſſented, when ſhe found there was no probability of returning. I then left her to write my own letter, which was to Mrs. Maitland's maid, whom I mentioned above; wherein I told her, that Miſs Ackworth would not come home that night, but ſhe was not to diſcover it to any perſon breathing; and, leſt ſhe ſhould be tempted, I deſired that, on pretence of ſeeing a dying mother, or ſome ſuch thing, ſhe would leave the houſe immediately, and wait at mine till my return. —When Miſs Ackworth had written her letter, I ſaid I would deliver it to the ſervant myſelf, as I had ſome particular orders to give him. On quitting the room, I threw it into the fire, ſending only my own to Mrs. Maitland's ſervant.

Surely nothing but the demon of malice could have ſuggeſted ſuch a thought; let the reſult be what it would, it could be

be productive of no advantage to myſelf; but I was determined to make the ſtill too tenderly beloved Courtland feel one night's pain, who had made me endure ſo many.

The next morning the ſervant who carried our letters returned. I ſaw Miſs Ackworth felt hurt at receiving no anſwer to hers; and, to add to her inquietude, the fellow ſaid it was impoſſible for us to return to town with any degree of ſafety. In this manner we were detained till the third morning, when Lady Bell carried us back to town, and dropt us at our reſpective houſes. I waited for ſeveral days with the utmoſt impatience to know what effect my plan had had on the impetuous mind of Courtland. I ſaw my aſſiſtant in iniquity at laſt, who informed me, that ſhe was ſeized in the ſtreet as a ſuſpected perſon by Mrs. Maitland's ſervants, for quitting her place ſo abruptly. They threatened her with inſtant impriſonment if ſhe did not diſcloſe all ſhe knew of ſo miſchievous a plot. To ſave herſelf ſhe made me the ſacrifice. Heavens and earth! with what confidence can I appear again in the world? Lady Bell has ſent me a card, ſignifying ſhe ſhall not call again at my door; and from Courtland I have ſuch a letter—O! that with a curſe

I could annihilate the whole ſex.——— Adieu.

AUGUSTA FINLEIGH.

LETTER XX.

H. Courtland, *Eſq.* *to Lady* Auguſta Finleigh.

Great Ormond-ſtreet.

I PRESUME, Madam, ſo capacious a heart as your Ladyſhip's can never want food to glut its voracity, whilſt there lives a virtuous character to ſacrifice to its hunger.

For the injuries, Madam, I have ſuſtained at your hands, I thank you, as they have been the means of unfolding to me excellencies undiſcovered before in my dear Miſs Ackworth's character. I thank God *ſhe* was unconſcious of the malice you intended *me*, till it was all over. Remember, Lady Auguſta, though your triumph was great, it was ſhort-lived. The rays of divine juſtice will throw a light on the moſt ſecret myſteries of iniquity: the evil machinations of your heart are fully known. If you are not

not loſt to all ſenſe of ſhame, bluſh—and repent.

Before I have done with you, Madam, give me leave to inform you, that however a woman's quality may place her in life above her fellow mortals, ſhe degrades herſelf below the meaneſt, if ſhe ſuffers the ſuggeſtions of the devil to debaſe the qualities of her mind; for when the veil of mortality is thrown aſide, 'tis not an emblazoned coronet can ſhield the wearer from retributive juſtice. —That your ſatisfactions may be complete in this life, know that you have robbed me of all that could give ſatisfaction to mine.

With my hearty wiſhes for your ſpeedy repentance, I have the honour to be, Madam, your's, &c.

H. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXI.

Miſs Courtland *to Mrs.* Aylbert.

Soho-ſquare.

NOTHING but afflictions, deareſt Madam. We arrived in town but two days ſince, ſent for expreſs by Mrs.

Maitland. But, good heavens! in what a ſhocking ſituation did we find my brother; a ſecret grief preys upon his mind, which no entreaty of my father, or my dear Sir William Falkner, can get him to diſcloſe. I find, that in Emmeline's abſence he was ſent for to viſit the Marchioneſs, whom her friends believed to be dying. She diſcovered to him Lady Auguſta Finleigh's treachery concerning the letter. I ſhudder leſt my unfortunate brother, ſubdued in a tender moment, when he believed his Emmeline falſe, ſhould have made the Marchioneſs a promiſe which may be fatal to us all. I have communicated my fears to Mrs. Maitland, and ſhe has dreadful apprehenſions that they have a foundation in truth. I'm ſent for.

Again I take up my pen. My brother's fits of deſpondency make us fear much for his head. His Emmeline ſits by him —hangs upon his arm—lays her hand upon his forehead, and tenderly aſks him where his pain lies? He takes it, kiſſes it, then lays it to his heart, and continues ſilent for whole hours, then ſtarts into a phrenzy, and, beating his breaſt, ſays, "Vows are ſacred things—they are regiſtered

giſtered in heaven."—My father affects to chide him, and tells him, he is unlike the gallant bridegroom he expected to find, whoſe wedding he is come ſo long a journey to celebrate.

"O mock me not," exclaims he; "with the tranſporting ſounds of joy inſult not a wretch who has undone himſelf—'twas pity and deſpair compelled the vow;—but you muſt love my ſweet Emmeline—when I am far removed."

"And whither would you go?" ſaid I.

"Where the malice of women can never more reach me, my dear Sophy; where death ſhall ſhut out miſery, and diſcharge my breaſt of its load of ſorrows." Poor Emmeline ſat by him, till, oppreſſed by grief ſhe feared to betray, ſhe abſolutely fainted. My dear Sir William caught her in his arms, and carried her out, attended by Mrs. Maitland.—This made my brother almoſt frantic: he would have followed her, but my father detained him by force, and ſaid he would take the opportunity of her abſence to urge him to ſay what could occaſion him to act in this very extraordinary manner; for he feared his behaviour would be the death of Emmeline, and that his repentance might come when it was too late to ſave her.

He took a hand of each as we ſat by him, and, after ſighing profoundly, he told us (what I ſuſpected before), that, believing the Marchioneſs dying and Emmeline falſe, he vowed never to marry, if the Marchioneſs would conſent to reconcile herſelf to life, and exert all her powers to forward her recovery.

"Thank Heaven," ſaid my father, embracing him, "it is nothing worſe: be comforted, my dear boy; I will anſwer to ſmooth every difficulty for you with the Marchioneſs: when I was ſome years younger," ſaid he gaily, "I was ſuppoſed to have had ſome influence with the ladies, and I hope I ſtill retain enough to plead your cauſe with ſucceſs."

"Could I dare hope," ſaid he eagerly, "what a happy man I might yet be!"

"We ſhall all be happy, brother," ſaid I, "and from this moment let our happineſs begin," throwing my arms round him. He ſaid, he had been ſo often cheated, that he had no confidence in any thing. "Surely," ſaid my father, "my dear Courtland, our affection for you has been always the ſame, and Emmeline's but gathers ſtrength from your diſtreſs."

"Where is ſhe?" returned he. "O that I dared give a looſe to the tender tumult which ſwells my boſom!" "And

why

why not?" ſaid my father. "Come let us find out the dear child." At that moment ſhe entered, my father took her hand, and preſenting it to my brother, told him, he ſhould think him a negligent lover if he did not become the entire maſter of it before to-morrow night.

You will gueſs, Madam, that ſhe was at a loſs to underſtand him, as was alſo Mrs. Maitland and Sir William. "Sir William," ſaid my father, "this boy of mine has been at his old tricks, tormenting himſelf for nothing at all: now if in his gloomy fits he has forgotten to play the part of a lover for the reſt of the evening, I beg you would ſet him the example. I ſhall leave you my Sophia to practiſe with; and Mrs. Maitland muſt excuſe my drinking tea with her, as I am engaged to the Marchioneſs de Beaulieu;" then catching up his hat, and bowing very gallantly, he withdrew.

My poor brother's ſpirits were ſo raiſed by this behaviour of my father's, that he wanted no examples of affection to be ſet him for his conduct towards Emmeline: he was all love, joy, and tenderneſs, which ſhe returned with unfeigned affection.

Thus having brought things to a happier ſtate than they have been in for ſome

time, I beg leave to conclude with aſ-ſuring you, that I am, dear Madam, your's, &c.

S. COURTLAND.

LETTER XXII.

Sir William Falkner *to Mrs.* Aylbert.

Soho-ſquare.

THE ſubject I have to lay before you, Madam, muſt plead my apology for this abrupt method of introducing myſelf. The evil which ſeems ſo long to have threatened this excellent family, has at length burſt upon them with the utmoſt malignity:—their affliction is too highly wrought for words, and too poignant to find relief in tears——

Mr. Courtland is dead!—

And who ſhall attempt to paint the ſorrows of his widowed Emmeline?—At preſent, exhauſted nature robs her of the ſenſe of pain. My dear Miſs Courtland too—but I cannot ſtop to particularize;—the General is gone in purſuit of his murdered ſon:—All that I can relate at preſent is, that we were aſſembled

at

at breakfaſt, waiting the arrival of Mr. Courtland, and looking on ourſelves as the happieſt family in the world, when Wilſon, Mr. Courtland's favourite ſervant, ran in, exclaiming, with a countenance ſtiffened with horror, "That d——d Frenchman, Marſin, has murdered my dear maſter in a tavern!"

I would have accompanied the General; but he, pointing to his ſpiritleſs children, left the room with the utmoſt precipitation.

A ſervant is juſt returned—alas! he brings no conſolation; — he beheld the kneeling father weeping over the body of his breathleſs ſon!——

Ah, Madam! henceforth let not the heirs of mortality dare to ſay, "To-morrow, I will be happy!"

Believe me to remain, with great reſpect, your moſt obedient, &c.

W. FALKNER.

LETTER XXIII.

Sir William Falkner, *in Continuation.*

I AM deſired, Madam, by my dear Miſs Courtland, to give you farther particulars of our diſtreſſed ſituation, as ſhe is unable to hold her pen.

About four in the afternoon the General returned to take a tender look of his diſconſolate children; but the ſight of him, for a time, exhauſted them of the little life which nature had left them. As ſoon as they began to feel the force of his parental careſſes, preſſing them to his boſom, he ſaid,

" God Almighty, my beloved children, though his chaſtiſements may be ſometimes ſevere, is yet as benevolent and tender in his mercies. As he has been a witneſs of your ſorrows, let him alſo witneſs your gratitude. My ſon lives."—Miſs Ackworth fetched a deep ſigh, and ſunk upon the breaſt of the General. I ſupported my dear Miſs Courtland, who was ſaved from fainting by a violent burſt of tears, which ſhe ſhed for the firſt time. A ſolemn ſilence for ſome minutes enſued.

" I be-

"I believe," ſaid the General, recovering himſelf, "I muſt tell the little hiſtory of my good fortune to you, Mrs. Maitland, as theſe dear children don't ſeem capable yet of attending to me.

"You muſt know, then, I followed Richard to the fatal ſpot, where I found my dear boy to all appearance dead, and weltering in his blood. Before I could reach him, two ſurgeons were arrived, who were ſtripping him to examine his wounds. I felt him breathe, and deſired he ſhould be laid on a bed before they proceeded to dreſs him. But the moving him robbed us of the ſmall hopes we began to conceive. The ſurgeons would have deſiſted at once, but happily my preſence of mind ſeldom forſakes me. I had ſeen more wounds in a minute, created by powder and ball, than they could have examined in a lifetime. They found one ball had entered his right ſide, the other his arm. They thought the caſe deſperate, and begged to deſiſt, as every ſymptom of life ſeemed to be departed. Notwithſtanding this, I urged them to proceed, which they did with great ſkill, and extracted two balls. Happily for my Harry, the loſs of blood prevented his feeling the torture of the operation. When his wounds were dreſſed,

he was laid in bed, his pulſe ſoon returned, and he fell into a gentle kind of ſtupor, or ſleep, for ſeveral hours. At length he recovered himſelf, and ſeemed perfectly in his ſenſes. On ſeeing me, he ſaid, "Never let my dear Emmeline know what a trick this wicked Frenchman has played me."

"I told him, that every thing ſhould be managed with the utmoſt diſcretion; but for the preſent I muſt impoſe ſilence upon him, as the quantity of blood he had loſt would not permit him to make the leaſt exertion of his ſpirits. Finding him diſpoſed again for ſleep, I haſtened hither to communicate the welcome intelligence to my good friends."

We ſaw no more of him that night; I wiſhed to attend him, but he ſaid I could no ways oblige him ſo effectually, as by preaching the doctrine of patience and comfort to his dear children.

The next morning at breakfaſt, he ſent me the following note:

"MY ſon paſſed as good a night as could be expected. Though he was frequently delirious, yet I find him tolerably compoſed this morning. This is the account he gives of his rencontre with Monſieur Marſin——

'As I knew Sir William's impatience to be in Soho-ſquare, I bid him take the chariot firſt, as it might be an hour and half before I could be there, being to meet ſome tradeſmen with whom my ſteward was to ſettle accounts. Sir William had not been gone long when Wilſon delivered me a note, deſiring my immediate attendance here on buſineſs of the utmoſt importance. As it was written in French, and without any ſignature, I concluded ſome old acquaintance was arrived from France, who wiſhed to ſurpriſe me. I drove hither immediately, when the waiter informed me, that a Monſieur Marſin was waiting for me above ſtairs. I went up gaily, not the leaſt ſuſpecting miſchief, though I remembered he was the Marchioneſs's rejected lover, and would have poſſeſſed her late huſband's fortune had he not married. Contrary to the national character of his countrymen, I found him ſullen, moroſe, and gloomy. He addreſſed me in a moſt abrupt and ungentlemanlike manner, telling me, that whilſt he wore a ſword, or could draw a trigger, no man upon earth ſhould call the Marchioneſs de Beaulieu his. "And why this apoſtrophe to me, Monſieur?" ſaid I. "I aſſure you I have no intentions of injuring

juring you with her: ſhe is an amiable woman, Sir, and therefore it might aid your cauſe more effectually would you ſtrive to win her by tenderneſs, not ſubdue her by threats."—"I am not to be dictated to, Mr. Courtland; I am maſter of my own actions." "And ſo am I, Sir, and therefore wiſh you a good morning, as you can have nothing of importance enough to detain me, who have a moſt agreeable appointment in hand."

'He ſtepped forward, and, ſeizing me by the collar of my coat (at which every drop of blood in my veins began to boil), ſaid, he knew well my engagement with the Marchioneſs, to whom I had been wondrouſly kind ſince ſhe had raiſed my ambition with the proſpect of poſſeſſing her fortune. — With more warmth than would have become the dignity of a philoſopher, I bid him beware how he ſupported ſo infamous an aſſertion; and then added, that had I found him a gentleman, there were many particulars relative to the Marchioneſs of which I would gladly have informed him. "I hope this then will bring you to the uſe of ſpeech," ſaid he, putting a piſtol in my hand. "Not a bit the more, Monſieur, for your menaces," ſaid I. "Then this ſhall," replied he, and fired. This

is

is all I know of the affair; by what means I find myſelf here in bed, I muſt beg you, my dear Sir, to explain.'

"Thus far my ſon. I told him, the report of the piſtol brought the whole houſe into the room from whence the report iſſued. The haughty Frenchman, made deſperate by the two worſt fiends which can aſſault the human breaſt, pride and revenge, drew his ſword, and made ſome attempts to defend himſelf, till at length his proud ſpirit was obliged to yield to numbers. The report reaching the ſtreet, that a Frenchman had juſt killed an Engliſhman of faſhion, poor Monſieur nearly riſked being torn to pieces by an enraged populace, as he was carrying to priſon by the ſervants belonging to the houſe, who took him. Theſe particulars I knew not till the night was too far advanced to procure Monſieur a more commodious lodging."

I now take up my pen, Madam, by command of the young ladies, to give you the contents of the General's ſecond letter.

"AS I ſhall not be able to-night, my dear Sir William, to call on my good friends

friends in Soho-ſquare, pray aſſure them, that our dear boy appears much better than when you left him.

" I went, as I told you I intended, to releaſe Monſieur Marſin from his confinement. I predetermined not to wound the feelings of this unhappy man, by expoſtulating with him. But I need have been under no apprehenſion of that ſort; for he betrayed not the leaſt emotion on being told who I was, but maintained all that ſullen *hauteur* my ſon deſcribed him to poſſeſs.

' I am happy to tell you, Sir,' ſaid I, ' that the goodneſs of Providence ſhielded the breaſt of my ſon againſt the deadly blow you aimed againſt his heart; I am flattered with the hopes of his recovery; but whether he lives or dies, I bring your diſcharge. I would not wound your feelings, by ſending it to you by the hands of your keeper. Go, Sir, and remember, that the laws of God and thoſe of the duelliſt differ widely. By ſubmiſſion to the former, you are certain of a bleſſed reward; and, by adhering to the latter, the only recompence is damnation.' Bowing, I left him to purſue his own plan.

" I then drove to pay my ſecond viſit to the Marchioneſs. Though I have not had leiſure to acquaint you with the particulars

ticulars of the firſt, ſuffice it to ſay, that I am in a fair way to become my ſon's rival with her.

"I found her in an agony of mind paſt the power of language to deſcribe. Her ſervants had been indiſcreet enough to tell her of my poor boy's miſhap. 'He is dead! he is dead!' exclaimed ſhe, on ſeeing me, 'and I the accurſed cauſe.—O pity and forgive, Sir!' and with her hands claſped, ſhe ſunk down at my feet.

"I raiſed her in the gentleſt manner; entreated her to look on me as the meſſenger of comfort, for that I was come to inform her my dear boy was in a fair way of recovery.

'Great Heavens! I thank thee,' cried ſhe, again claſping her hands; 'then I am callous to all future ills. Here you ſee me, Sir, a poor ſolitary woman, though ſurrounded by affluence, baſely betrayed by thoſe I truſted, and expoſed to menaces by thoſe whom I have never injured. My only friend and companion, Mademoiſelle Linon, to whom I confided every ſecret in my boſom, has baſely betrayed me to Monſieur Marſin; by giving a wrong colouring to the laſt converſation that paſſed between Mr. Courtland and me, ſhe made him believe your

your ſon had renounced his engagement with Miſs Ackworth, and that on my recovery he was to give me his hand.

'The unfeeling monſter ruſhed into my preſence, treated me with the moſt opprobrious language, and vowed, that man ſhould be ſacrificed to his reſentment who dared diſpute with him the prize of my hand. He would not ſtay, that I might undeceive him, but ruſhed out of the houſe with the utmoſt precipitation, vowing nothing but revenge. He had promiſed to ſettle a handſome penſion on Mademoiſelle Linon, provided ſhe could ſecure his intereſts with me; and therefore every civility I received from Mr. Courtland, or any other gentleman, ſhe looked upon as detrimental to her own intereſt. And alas, Sir, I fear it is ſhe that has ſtimulated Marſin to make this cruel attack upon your ſon; for, on hearing of his aſſaſſination, ſhe ſecretly left the houſe, leſt, I ſuppoſe (knowing her guilt), ſhe ſhould be deemed an acceſſary in ſo vile a piece of treachery.'

"I urged her to dry up her tears, and look forward to better days, as I hoped every thing would turn out happily at laſt.

'O Sir,' ſaid ſhe, 'you muſt be in my ſituation to feel the force of kindneſs on an

an aching heart. I am not hypocrite enough to pretend to conceal from you the tender regard I have for many years borne your ſon; a regard which has been attended with peculiar infelicities to us both. Entreat him to forgive me all the miſeries which I have unintentionally been the cauſe of making him endure; and tell him, that with every future petition I make to Heaven, I will offer one that all the bleſſings of life may for ever attend him and his beloved Lady. Tell her, ſhe will have no more fears to endure from the high-ſouled Vilette; tell her, that I have learnt wiſdom from affliction; and were the hand of Courtland diſengaged, and his heart alſo, and they were offered to me, I would refuſe them both.'

"Such, my dear Sir William, was principally the converſation I had with the Marchioneſs. There is a ſpirit and generoſity in her way of thinking, that at once claims one's admiration and pity. My only wonder now is, how my boy could have reſiſted the ſplendour of her beauty and the charms of her converſation; at an age, too, when the paſſions run high.

"Pray tell my Sophia and Mrs. Maitland, I have engaged that they ſhall pay the Marchioneſs a viſit to-morrow.

There

"There is a little girl in Soho-ſquare, of whom my poor boy is continually talking, whether ſleeping or waking. I ventured to aſk him, Were I to bring her to viſit him, could he bear the ſight of her without emotion?

'That is more,' ſaid he, ſmiling, 'than I dare promiſe; for if the ſight of her in high health had frequently the power to ſhake every nerve, I can't anſwer how I could ſuſtain the ſhock now: however, if you would let me ſee her but for one little moment, you would be better able to judge of my behaviour: do, dear dear Sir, try me!'

"Cunning rogue!

"But recollecting himſelf—'I'm in a tavern, am I not? My Emmeline's delicacy then muſt not be hurt by coming hither.' "Never fear that," ſaid I; "ſhe ſhall be guarded by a whole ſquadron of females, to prevent ſcandal from blowing round the metropolis, that Courtland and his Emmeline were ſeen together in a tavern.

"Good night, my dear friends. May that Supreme Power, who faithfully watches over his creatures, preſerve you through it, and raiſe you up to a new day. Though leſs diſtinguiſhed, perhaps, by his judgments, yet let your gratitude

gratitude for mercies received be always unceaſing.—Adieu.

H. COURTLAND."

The next day, Madam, on receiving the word of command, I headed a troop of Amazons to viſit the poor ſufferer. He was too weak, as his father feared, to command his feelings; for on ſeeing his Emmeline he fainted. We entreated her not to be alarmed, as it would be merely temporary, and was occaſioned only from his feelings being too powerful for his ſtrength. He ſoon recovered; and finding her hanging over him, he ſmiled on her with a look of ineffable ſweetneſs, and ſaid to his father, "I will be always ſick if you pleaſe, Sir, provided you bring me ſuch a cordial as this (kiſſing her hand). What man in his ſenſes would ſubmit to take the medicines of the apothecary, who can in a moment be cured by electrical fire?"

"I fancy though," ſaid his ſiſter, "the ſhock was rather too ſtrong for you, or you would have borne it more like a man."

"I am afraid," ſaid he, "Falkner, you will never be able to humble this ſaucy ſiſter of mine."

"I am content," ſaid I, "to take her as ſhe is; yet I believe, were it neceſſary to correct her faults, the buſineſs might be atchieved with much leſs difficulty than to teach her brother diſcretion."—They laughed.

We attempted at a little general chat to divert him; but he paid us little attention; for his Emmeline abſorbed all his faculties: ſhe ſat with her eyes fixed on his pale countenance, ſometimes wiping away the tear which would unbidden ariſe, and ſometimes heaving a ſigh ſo piteous, as to catch the attention of every one.

Our viſit was ſhort, but is to be renewed as we find the patient gathers ſtrength.

The Ladies all unite in beſt compliments, and I have the honour to remain, Madam, your much obliged

W. FALKNER.

LETTER XXIV.

Miſs Ackworth *to Mrs.* Aylbert.

O Madam! what a day was Tueſday fortnight. May it be the blackeſt in my ſhort calendar. In my diſtreſs I had no comfort—I had loſt the power of prayer. My heart was cold, and all its fervour dead. The privilege of tears was even denied me, but ſighs and groans aroſe ſpontaneouſly.

I have ſeen the beloved cauſe of my ſorrow. Alas! how changed. I have ſoothed him in his affliction, and have made my ſupporting arm a pillow for his head. I have bathed his pallid cheek with my tears, and held his trembling hand againſt my beating heart.

He recovers daily; and I can once more ſtyle myſelf your happy

EMMELINE ACKWORTH.

As my letter has lain by for ſeveral poſts, through the negligence of the ſervant, I will not ſend it away without informing you of my preſent embarraſſ-

ment. The General has juſt been with me. He bids me prepare my heart to ſtand a great trial to-morrow. The ſon of that friend to whom my father wiſhed to ſee me united, will be here. I tell him it will be no trial to my heart, for it is ſo ſtedfaſt to its firſt attachment, it never can know another.

But he will not believe me till the trial comes; "for," continued he, "this perſon is young—rich—very handſome, and to complete all—a Lord. Therefore I cannot but ſhudder for the fate of my poor boy."——So ſaying, he left me, without hearing what I had further to ſay againſt this hated interview; at a time too, when Mr. Courtland is juſt recovering from ſuch imminent danger.

The Marchioneſs is much better, and much more compoſed; Mrs. Maitland and Sophy have viſited her ſeveral times, and the General ſays gaily, he hopes ſoon to rival his ſon in her affections.—Adieu once more.

E. A.

LETTER XXV.

To the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

THE interview is over!—In the hour of temptation let not woman boaſt her ſtrength; for the tyrant Ambition, in a luckleſs moment, ſilenced every tender affection in my boſom that I once felt for the loſt Courtland! The ſplendor—the title—the eloquence of my late father's friend, prevailed over love and duty, and yeſterday, at the pariſh church of St. Ann's, I vowed eternal obedience to Lord Ormſley, with whoſe loved name I ſubſcribe myſelf your happy

EMMELINE ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Same.

FOR the better comprehending my laſt letter, dear Madam, I muſt go far back with my ſtory.

As the General had prepared me to expect the viſit from the newly-arrived ſtranger, at breakfaſt he very pleaſantly ſaid, he expected his Lordſhip at twelve, and begged I would ſpend the intermediate two hours at my toilet, that no charm might be neglected which might aſſiſt to fetter his Lordſhip's reaſon.

"Alas! my dear Sir," ſaid I, "I have not vanity enough to wiſh to win a title, nor conſequence enough to wear one.—Therefore, if you love me, ſave me, I conjure you, from an interview I have not ſpirits to ſupport."

"Any other favour, my dear love," ſaid he, embracing me, "that comes within the limits of my power, I will freely grant;—but the ſolemn promiſe I made your excellent father one day, to introduce his Lordſhip to you, I cannot break without wounding my honour. But be courageous my dear girl, and attend your toilet."

"That I am determined not to do," ſaid I; "for if uglineſs can preſerve me from importunity, I will be deformity itſelf."

"It cannot be to-day then," ſaid Sir William Falkner, "for I think I never ſaw you look ſo handſome."

"I am of your opinion," interrupted Mrs. Maitland; "and have been telling her,

her, that I think her late troubles, ſo far from diminiſhing her beauty, have very much added to it."

"So you ſee, Emmeline," rejoined Miſs Courtland, "that they are determined to flatter you at all events: but don't believe them!—you look quite a fright to day. Your countenance might pleaſe my brother, but he has no taſte; for he doats on that vulgar red with which nature is pleaſed to ſtain the cheeks of her favourite children, but which is highly diſguſting to thoſe men who are only in habits of ſeeing pale-faced women of quality."

I cheerfully ſubmitted to their raillery; though I was determined on making no alteration in my dreſs.

When breakfaſt was over, every face ſeemed to expreſs looks very ſignificant of ſomething extraordinary: when Sir William riſing, told the General, that as he would be engaged for the greater part of the morning in receiving his new gueſt, he would take that opportunity of ſitting with Mr. Courtland; "though I ſee, Madam," ſhaking his head at me, "that you would readily exchange ſituations with me." I coloured;—he withdrew.

The General then led me to the little drawing-room—I trembled; my feet

could ſcarcely ſupport me.—I hung round his neck as we entered, entreating him not to leave me.

"My ſweet love," ſaid he, "conſider the ſingularity of the favour you aſk.—When a lady receives a declaration of love from a very handſome young fellow, ſhe is ſeldom anxious for the preſence of a third perſon: yet, ſhould you *inſiſt* on my ſtay after I have introduced him, I ſhall be better able to judge of the propriety of your requeſt, when I have ſeen how the ſtranger conducts himſelf towards you."

At that inſtant a violent rapping at the door threw me into an univerſal tremor.

"This is his Lordſhip's rap, my dear," ſaid the General; "I muſt go and receive him."

He was no ſooner gone, than I thought of making my eſcape by running up ſtairs; and had juſt reached the door, when I heard voices on the ſtair-caſe. I threw myſelf on a chair in the darkeſt corner of the room; I hung my head, ſo that I ſaw them not when they entered.

"My Lord Ormſley," ſaid the General, taking my hand, "is deſirous of paying his reſpects to you."—"Take this hand, my Lord," putting it into his, "it

is

is the precious gift long ſince deſtined for you by Colonel Ackworth, to make you the happieſt of men; and long may you live to deſerve ſuch a treaſure!"

I now ventured to caſt up my eyes; when his lordſhip threw himſelf into my arms, ſaying, "My life! my ſoul! my Emmeline!—After all we have endured, is it thus we meet again?" tenderly preſſing me to his boſom. "'Tis I, my love, who have been thus long the rival of myſelf: that beſt of men there has told me all."

"And is it poſſible," ſaid I, "that it is my dear Mr. Courtland againſt whom I have been hardening my heart?" (almoſt fainting with exceſs of joy.)

"It is, my dear child," ſaid the General; "but I believe, my love, you can diſpenſe with my preſence now you find your lover a leſs formidable creature than you expected; and I will return to you again when I think that your ſpirits, and thoſe of my dear boy, are more compoſed to hear what further I have to ſay on this ſubject."—Then giving us an affectionate ſmile, he withdrew; though I entreated him not to leave us.

I cannot paint to you the tender ſatiſfaction my beloved Courtland expreſſed,

at the anxiety I had undergone at the proſpect of receiving the addreſſes of his ſuppoſed rival; nor can I expreſs the heart-felt pleaſure I endured, to have him thus reſtored to my ardent prayers, after the dangers he had encountered.—We were both too much oppreſſed by our feelings to be very eloquent; yet our looks partly expreſſed thoſe ſenſations which the fulneſs of our hearts prevented us from uttering.

It being the firſt time he had quitted his apartment, he found his ſtrength ſo very inadequate to the fatigue of coming hither, added to the great exertion his ſpirits had undergone, that he was ſeveral times on the point of fainting; but by obliging him to take ſomething reſtorative, and to lie down for half an hour, it had the deſired effect, and enabled him to bear the congratulations of his friends with the higheſt delight.

As he was much too feeble to bear the fatigues of ſitting at table, my good friends indulged me with a pleaſure for which I ſighed, but wanted courage to aſk—that of being permitted to preſide over his ſlender repaſt; but my extreme attention about him, he ſaid, had a ſad effect on his appetite; he could not eat,

eat, for the tranſports of his boſom were too highly wrought to enable him to digeſt common aliment.

When the General had dined, he returned to us.—"'Tis now, my children," ſaid he, "I wiſh to engage your attention for a few minutes—You muſt know, my Emmeline, that on introducing this young gentleman to you under the character of Lord Ormſley, I have been guilty of no fiction: for my old uncle Lord Courtland died ſuddenly that very morning which had nearly proved ſo deſtructive to us all, by whoſe death I came into poſſeſſion of an earldom, to which was annexed a very ſplendid fortune. Thus you ſee the decrees of Providence pay no diſtinction to rank or fortune, for I came into poſſeſſion of both on the ſaddeſt day I ever paſſed in my life, but *one*"—drawing out his handkerchief, and wiping his eyes, which gliſtened with a tear that he often drops to the memory of his once loved Sophia—he then proceeded.

"Till this day I never informed my Harry of the honours which had befallen him, leſt his mind, weakened by pain, ſhould have felt them as inſults. Thus far, my Emmeline, I have proceeded to clear my conduct of all ambiguity. And

now, my dear Ormſley, I will give you my reaſons for having ſo long alarmed your fears with the thoughts of a rival:— My dear Emmeline's parents and I, when you were both very young, formed the plan of having that friendſhip which ſubſiſted between us, one day more firmly cemented between our children; but we knew from experience, that if compulſion were uſed on either ſide, it would be a means of fruſtrating our wiſhes. I therefore adopted the plan you have already ſeen carried into execution, and you have both been witneſſes of its ſucceſs.

"When you firſt acquainted me, my ſon, with the ſituation of your heart reſpecting this dear child, you had given me no proofs of the ſtability of your principles; though I believed your affection for her as ſincere as you declared it to be, yet your general conduct towards women had been ſuch, that I was determined not to grant my Emmeline to your wiſhes, till your affection for her had been proved by further trial; and I thought one winter more in London, amidſt the various ſcenes of beauty which would there open upon your ſenſes, would ſufficiently prove its ſincerity: I therefore determined to procraſtinate your marriage by forging the ſtory of a rival,

that

that you might not think that in refuſing this dear child to your wiſhes, my conduct was actuated by caprice.

" You have now, my Harry, bravely buffeted the billows of adverſity; and at length, I hope, have ſafely made port; and here is a wife for your reward," preſenting him my hand, " who I hope will prove a bleſſing to you in every future voyage of life."

My dear Lord Ormſley (ah, how often have I regretted the beloved name of Courtland!) was all joy—all rapture—all gratitude;—while your ſilly friend had only a tear to offer him in exchange.

Lord Courtland afterwards proceeded: —" Though life be ſubject to ſtrange viciſſitudes, my children, I truſt you will find few ſo alarming as thoſe you have already experienced; and I do not regret their having paſſed, as they are ſo happily got over. I hope you have learnt from them a very uſeful leſſon, to know the mutability of all human events. Afflictions only can teach us properly how to eſtimate the bleſſings of life. The hand of Heaven is equally ſeen in what it gives as in what it takes away; an uninterrupted courſe of proſperity often proves a ſnare to the ſoul, by rendering it inſenſible to the benefits of its Maker: for

for he who has not felt the diſpleaſure of the Almighty, ſeldom knows how to adminiſter the cup of conſolation to a brother in affliction.

" The world, my children, though it may be juſtly called a ſchool of pleaſure, may be ſtyled alſo, with as much truth, a ſchool of virtue; for it is the touch-ſtone whereby our integrity is to be tried; but the power of reſiſting its deceitful blandiſhments can only be found in *ſecret prayer*, which, by ſupporting our faith, ſubdues our paſſions. Since man is a compound of good and evil, Heaven hath been graciouſly pleaſed to plant in our boſoms the powers of reſiſtance; and ſhall we not combat with ſin, when we have our own ſouls to defend, and God for our ally?

" Look round this town, my ſon, and you will ſee how many families are ſinking in miſery, the ſole conſequence of their paſt imprudence, and not the chaſtiſement of afflicting Providence.—You ſee one man waſting with diſeaſe, the ſad effects of his own intemperance; another groaning beneath the weight of diſappointed ambition; a third pining with diſcontent, becauſe his neighbour poſſeſſes more than he can poſſibly enjoy; a fourth expoſed to the rude inſults of mercileſs creditors, for having waſted an ample fortune

fortune in mad riots and intemperate debauches.

" You ſee alſo old men tottering on the brink of the grave, without having once formed a thought how man ſhould live ſo as to diſarm death of his terrors when he arrives.—And we ſee young ones ſo addicted to vicious habits, as to make them feel all the debility of age, at a time when their youth and talents are capable of the higheſt exertions of virtue and knowledge.

" In your future conduct through life, my ſon, be it your ſtudy leſs to dread the cenſures of men than the reproaches of your own conſcience.——By the death of our relation you will be called upon to fill an important ſtation in life; let your actions then add a luſtre to your name, and reſt not ſatisfied with the mere bauble of a title; for virtue ennobles the man born to no titles, and vice debaſes him who bears the higheſt: worldly dignities and honours cannot command a moment's repoſe to him who languiſhes on the bed of ſickneſs; they cannot quell the ragings of a fever, or ſilence the upbraidings of conſcience."——Then preſſing us both to his boſom, he poured on each the paternal benediction, and retired.

You will gueſs, my dear Madam, how much we were affected at a ſcene ſo ſerious and unexpected.

"I have no hopes, my dear Emmeline," ſaid my complaiſant Lord, "of ever ſupporting the character my father wiſhes me to fill, but through your means;—you were bred in the ſchool of virtue and innocence: henceforward, then, be it your province to dictate, and mine to OBEY."

We were ſoon after honoured with the felicitations of our friends.—Lady Sophia ſaluted me as a ſiſter dearer to her than ever; ſo did Sir William.

"I little thought once, Falkner," ſaid my amiable Lord, "that I ſhould ever ſee you embrace this dear girl, and not be impelled with an immediate deſire to run you through the body." They laughed heartily at this ſally; and I have the ſatisfaction to tell you, Madam, no little knot of friends ever ſeemed to ſpend an evening with more perfect harmony.

Leſt my good Lord ſhould take cold by being out after night, his father gave up his apartment to him here, and returned to his ſon's houſe with Sir William Falkner. Bleſs me! what a packet have I written: I muſt take another ſheet for

the

the *denouement* of my little adventures. Adieu.

E. ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXVII.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

THE medical gentry, who ſtill attend my dear Lord, compliment me upon my ſkill in phyſic; for they are generous enough to confeſs, that he began to mend from the firſt day I took his caſe into conſideration.

My amiable Ormſley had propoſed to me many days, out of which to chuſe one to put an end to his probation, as he was pleaſed to call it; but, with a childiſhneſs which was quite unpardonable, I found means to evade them all. I wiſhed to defer the awful moment for a few weeks, till my dear Sophia could ſet me an example of fortitude.

"Now," ſaid ſhe, in return for all theſe delays, "do you know, Emmeline, that when children know not what is good for themſelves, it is right that thoſe who have more wiſdom ſhould dictate for them.

Remem-

Remember, from this inſtant your power of commanding in this houſe is at an end, for we all grow tired of living under deſpotic government." And ſhe kept her word, as the ſequel will ſhew.

For ſeveral mornings the ſun breaking into my apartment tempted me to riſe much earlier than uſual, and to walk an hour in the park before any of the family were ſtirring, attended by my woman and a man-ſervant; I found myſelf much better for the exerciſe, and always returned gaily to breakfaſt by the time our friends were aſſembled.

As my appearance was rather too ſhowy for ſo early a promenade, it drew upon me one morning the attention of a gentleman, who purſued me ſo long that I was at length obliged to hurry home to avoid him.

To obviate this inconvenience, the next morning I caught up an old black ſattin bonnet and cloak of Mrs. Maitland's, and ſallied forth in the extremeſt diſhabille, that I might return in time to dreſs, as ſhe expected ſome very faſhionable friends to breakfaſt. Whilſt Warren was aſſiſting me to hurry on my things, ſhe appeared very anxious for my ſtaying at home, being apprehenſive of rain, ſaid the air was foggy, and that the walk would be

be more injurious than beneficial to my health; but, like "wilful woman labouring for her purpoſe," I was bent on having my own way. I haſtened down ſtairs, where Richard had orders to attend. He likewiſe entreated me not to go out for fear it ſhould *ſnow*; and then whiſpering Warren, ſaid, "We ſhall have all the ſorrowing to do over again."

I could not help ſmiling, and walked on.—I had not got half way down the park when they civilly reminded me that breakfaſt would wait, and that my Lord would be anxious, and I know not what; yet ſtill I went on, contemplating on my preſent happy proſpects, till I found by my watch I had greatly overſtaid my time.

I walked back with ſo much precipitation, that I was quite out of breath when I got home; and my agitations were increaſed to find the gueſts were arrived.—I ſaw a beautiful new carriage at the door, with a coronet upon it, and ſervants attending, with rich ſilver liveries, and favours in their hats.

I was hurrying by them to my apartment to change my dreſs, which had received no very great embelliſhment from the ſpattering of a mud cart; when I was met on the ſtair-caſe by my dear Lord Ormſley,

Ormſley, dreſſed as faſhionably as a morning appearance would admit of: he caught me in his arms, and after gently chiding me for abſenting myſelf ſo long from him, would have led me into the company, but I entreated him firſt to ſuffer me to change my dreſs, and I would attend him in a few minutes, as he ſeemed to have paid a very unuſual attention to his. "The caſe is a very unuſual one, my deareſt life," added he; "it would not have been gallant in me to have appeared negligent in my dreſs on a day ſo important to my happineſs." "Why, what do you mean?" ſaid I; a ſtrong ſuſpicion glancing through my mind, which put me almoſt out of breath.—"Our friends in the drawing-room, my love, will explain what I mean."

He carried me in by force; where I ſaw every body dreſſed much beyond the uſual ſtyle. "For Heaven's ſake, my dear Mrs. Maitland," ſaid I, "what is the meaning of all this parade, this fine breakfaſt?—this———"

"She means nothing more, my dear Emmeline," ſaid Lady Sophia, "than to compliment my brother on his wedding-day; but we have been ſadly diſconcerted by the loſs of the bride."

"I have

"I have found her at length, my dear ſiſter," ſaid my obliging Lord, taking my hand, for he ſaw I was ready to faint; "but ſhe muſt not be precipitated; don't you ſee ſhe has walked till ſhe is quite out of breath?"—How delicate was it in him, my dear Madam, to give ſuch a turn to the cauſe of my emotion! "But take time to recover, my beſt life," continued he.—"Aye, do my dear," added Lord Courtland, gently preſſing my hand. "Come Mrs. Maitland, a diſh of tea will give us all ſpirits before we go to church."—I was not at a loſs now why the ſervants were ſo unwilling to let me walk.

"My dear," ſaid Mrs. Maitland, "you forgot to pay your compliments to Doctor Tyefaſt." Here I looked up, and ſaw a gentleman I had not obſerved before, of the name of Bennet, a very good kind of man, and a great favourite of Mrs. Maitland's.

My dear friend then preſented me with a diſh of tea, which almoſt all fell to the ground before it could reach my lips, ſuch a tremor had gotten poſſeſſion of my hand;—he took it from me, ſaying, he would hold it till I was more compoſed; and hoped that I would not walk ſo faſt again."

"You

"You are too tender of my foibles, my dear Lord," ſaid I. "Entreat for me with our friends to excuſe my abſence for a few minutes, while I give a ſerious admonition to my poor fluttering heart." "You ſhall be indulged in every thing, my dear Emmeline," ſaid he; "I will learn *obedience* to all your *commands*."

"Piſh!" replied Lady Sophia. "If you will be always holding a parley, Harry, with her unreaſonable ſcruples, I can tell you, your's is a loſt caſe; and I'll give it up."

"I hope it is not yet a loſt caſe, my dear Sophy," ſaid Sir William Falkner. "Miſs Ackworth has too delicate a mind to diſappoint the hopes of ſuch a lover, when it is in her power to give him pleaſure of the moſt exquiſite kind."

"Perhaps," ſaid my amiable Lord, "my good ſiſter in fixing my happy day, ſince my angel inveſted her with the power, has not done it diſcretionally; if ſhe has been too precipitate, ſpeak, my deareſt love; you may have ſcruples now which may be removed ſome days hence."

"Indeed, indeed, my Lord" (for I thought he began to feel hurt) "I have none, I can have none;—but I am a ſilly girl, and want powers of mind to act conformably to the ſentiments of my heart: here

here is my hand, my friend; diſpoſe of it how and when you pleaſe."

With eager tranſport he preſſed it to his heart, and called on his friends to give him joy of his victory, and to beg their further attendance.

I entreated them to reſume their ſeats for a few minutes while I changed my dreſs; for ſurely, my Lord, you will never conſent to take a wife who has ſtolen goods on.—Don't you know Mrs. Maitland's bonnet and cloak?

"Perhaps I do," ſaid he; "and I confeſs I ſhould be horridly diſappointed if in exchange for my once ſo highly-prized liberty, the church gave me nothing but Mrs. Maitland's bonnet and cloak.—No! 'tis my angel's ſelf, and not her habiliments, I am about to take for *better* and for *worſe*." Then, without attending to my further prattle, he threw his arm round me, and hurried me down ſtairs to the coach; after handing me in, he gave place to his father and ſiſter, then ſtepped in himſelf: the reſt of the company following in Mrs. Maitland's coach.

Ah, Madam! what a change did a few minutes make in my ſituation! The irrevocable vow paſſed, we drove to Berkley-ſquare to my Lord's new houſe: when we arrived there, he handed me out; but

ſurely

ſurely never was there ſo ſhabby a looking creature as your Emmeline! I was led in triumph through a hall thronged with ſervants dreſſed in the richeſt liveries; and being come into the drawing-room, my dear Lord welcomed me to his houſe.

"Surely," exclaimed my Sophia, "my ſiſter Emmeline, you are the dirtieſt Miſs that ever noble Lord made a bride of."

"She is the richeſt gift, my ſiſter," ſaid my Lord, moſt obligingly, "that ever bounteous Heaven beſtowed on man!" again embracing me.—A tender ſcene of congratulation then enſued from all our friends; after which my Lord politely ſaid, "From this moment, my much-loved wife, you are to conſider yourſelf at home; and if for your own ſatisfaction you wiſh to attend your toilet, I will not ſo ſoon uſurp the huſband's prerogative as to detain you here; though give me leave to aſſure you, that you can never look more lovely in any dreſs than the preſent: and as to Mrs. Maitland's bonnet, upon my faith I think it infinitely becoming—it has but one fault that I know of."

"And pray what is that?" ſaid his father.

"Only my Lord," returned he, "that it conceals too much of the ſweeteſt face in the world from my eager eyes."

"That's

"That's a fault in a hat indeed," ſaid Sir William Falkner, "that few men of gallantry can pardon."

"This is a very happy age for the men then," rejoined Mrs. Maitland; "for the ſex in general are ſo liberal in expoſing their faces, that they have robbed mankind of the pleaſure they uſed to take in my days, to play at bo-peep for a month even to catch a ſingle glance of a pretty face. But after all, Lord Ormſley," continued ſhe, "the dreſs of ſixty receives more addition round the blooming features of twenty, than that of twenty does round thoſe of ſixty."

And now my dear, my excellent friend, beg of Heaven to grant me an humble ſpirit in this my day of proſperity; and teach me to make ſuch a right uſe of its bleſſings, that the ſplendours of *life* may not prove a ſnare to my ſoul in the hour of *death*.——I am, with the utmoſt affection, yours moſt ſincerely,

E. ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXVIII.

Lord Ormſley *to* G. Montroſe, *Eſq.*

DEAR GEORGE, Berkeley-ſquare.

THOUGH made within this hour the moſt tranſported of huſbands, I can, with the utmoſt ſincerity, ſubſcribe myſelf the moſt affectionate of your friends,

ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXIX.

To the ſame.

CALL me a dull doating huſband if thou wilt, George; for the perfections of my ſweet wife ſo mingle with my ink, my pen can find no other ſubject; though, before the expiration of our wedding-day, we quarrelled like dog and cat, as the vulgar phraſe it, and have already forfeited our claim to the flitch of bacon, merely for my attempting, when dinner was announced, to place her at the

the head of my table. The conteſt was carried on with great perſeverance on both ſides, till my father, who always fights my Emmeline's battles, whenever he finds her too warmly beſet, interpoſed, and conquered for her; and my defeat ſucceeded to her triumph; yet I muſt confeſs, Montroſe, ſhe bore it with ſuch ſweet modeſt dejection, as richly compenſated me for the loſs of victory.

During the whole day I was only once fortunate enough to raiſe on her cheek the ſmile of approbation. Having led her to church more *en diſhabille* (through an accident I have not leiſure to relate) than is uſual with Ladies in her ſituation; when we returned to Berkeley-ſquare afterwards, I gave her permiſſion to attend her toilet; and when ſhe had performed the various duties it enjoins, ſhe returned to her friends in the drawing-room, all clad in virgin white, pure as her ſpotleſs ſoul. I preſented her with the moſt charming bouquet of flowers London could produce; and, as a rich reward for my pains, was honoured with the ſmile of approbation.

"Other huſbands, Lady Ormſley," ſaid Sir William Falkner, "to ſecure the affections of their wives, bribe them

with gold, jewels, equipage, monkies, and fineries."

"True," ſaid I; "and you ſee, Falkner, a roſe and a pink have procured for me what not my whole fortune, diſpoſed of in the manner you mentioned, could have done—a ſmile from my deareſt Emmeline."

"I am glad to find, then," ſaid my ſiſter, "Emmeline is not quite faultleſs; ſince, like the reſt of her ſex, ſhe is not above taking a bribe, when the temptation proves agreeable to her inclinations."

"I wiſh you could tell me, Ormſley," ſaid Sir William, "what bribe I could make uſe of to ſecure my intereſt with your charming ſiſter?"

"I will tell you myſelf, Sir William," added ſhe; "continue to treat me like a reaſonable being; win firſt my eſteem, and that will ſecure you my love."

"I hope and truſt I ſhall not fail, my dear Lady Sophia," returned he, "now you have given me a clue to go by."

"Then remember," ſaid ſhe, "to uſe knowledge with judgment: never flatter my caprices at the expence of truth; nor ever debaſe the dignity of your underſtanding by affecting to adopt opinions, merely becauſe I have given them my ſupport.

ſupport. Whenever you find me in the wrong, you are to endeavour to convince my reaſon by ſtrength of argument, and not ſlaviſhly ſuffer me to remain in an error, becauſe you fear to incur my diſpleaſure by attempting to ſet me right. I muſt be valued and eſteemed as a woman, not coaxed and careſſed like a kitten. You muſt never think of making a *pet* of me, as my brother has of his darling here; for I ſhould get low ſpirited to the laſt degree, if you were to hang over me all day, oppreſſed by tender melancholy, becauſe my complexion was one ſhade paler than it was yeſterday."

"Very well, ſiſter," interrupted I; "but pray go on."

"Well then, brother, I have only further to inform Sir William, that I never knew a man who made a reſignation of his opinions to indulge the caprices of his miſtreſs, who did not, when ſhe became his wife, amply repay himſelf for the ſacrifice. I would have a lover attentive and rational; I would have a huſband complaiſant and fond."

"By my faith, then, my good ſiſter," cried I, kiſſing my Emmeline's hand, "though my deareſt wife here has not found me the moſt attentive and rational

of lovers, yet I hope ſhe will never have reaſon to ſay, as a huſband I am not complaiſant and fond." The cheek of my angel crimſoned at my vehemence; my father offered to be my bail, in any ſum, that I made no proteſtations I ſhould not fully confirm in my future conduct, and Mrs. Maitland offered to become my other ſurety.

My bluſhing love obligingly thanked them for their generous intentions, and ſaid, ſhe had that confidence in my honour, that ſhe muſt beg leave to decline their generous offers.

Sir William Falkner then ſaid, he would moſt joyfully embrace them, as perhaps they might ſtimulate his amiable Sophia to conſent to crown his wiſhes, as he was trebly anxious to figure in the character of a huſband, ſince he ſaw I played the part with ſo much eaſe and grace; "and though I may not come up to the original," added he, "I hope I ſhall not prove a very bad copy."

"I am ſorry to ſee, Sir William," ſaid my ſiſter, "you have already copied all that is bad in my brother; you have neglected the exerciſe of your own virtues, whilſt you have been ſtudying his faults."

"Dear

"Dear Lady Sophia," interrupted my pretty one, "Lord Ormſley can have *no* faults."

"A thouſand, child," returned ſhe: "No man has more; his fooliſh fondneſs for you has abſolutely ſpoiled Sir William, who is ſo apt to imitate whatever he ſees, and then, to ſhew me how critically he has ſtudied his part, expects my patience ſhould laſt out, whilſt he is rehearſing it all day long; for love-ſcenes are the dulleſt things on earth, and when I tell him ſo, he ſo bluſters, fumes, and frets, and behaves ſo exactly as I have ſeen you, brother, on former occaſions, that, ſo far from thinking him a copy, he appears to me an excellent original."

"I care not," ſaid he, "my dear Lady Sophia," gaily kiſſing her hand, "whether you like me beſt as a copy, or as an original, provided you will conſent to purchaſe me at laſt." As ſhe did not give a negative to his hopes, the debate was adjourned.

I have the pleaſure to inform you, Montroſe, my father is as fond of his daughter Emmeline as his ſon can be; and, to uſe my ſiſter's phraſe, makes as great a *pet* of her as your friend.

ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXX.

To the ſame.

TEN to one, dear George, but you will ſay I ſcribble to you more to indulge myſelf with the pleaſure of talking of my dear wife, than of procuring you amuſement. It may be ſo at preſent; but as you have ſo often declared the ſincere intereſt you take in whatever concerns me, I am encouraged to proceed.

Our gueſts all left us this morning. My father and ſiſter are gone into Derbyſhire to viſit our ancient aunt the Lady Eleanor. Sir William Falkner attends them to Ormſley-Caſtle; and then goes on to ſettle his affairs in Scotland previous to his marriage, and is to call upon them in his return to conduct them to Roſelands, where I have promiſed my beloved wife ſhall join them.

"Remember, Emmeline," ſaid my ſiſter, on taking a laſt embrace of her, "we leave you and my brother as happy as two dull ſouls can be who have vowed to ſpend their lives together; yet I ſhould not be ſurpriſed, before we reached our

our journey's end, to hear you had found out, as uſual, ſome ingenious method of tormenting each other: therefore remember, my dear girl, that prudence and patience are the beſt correctors of matrimonial acidities, and will entirely prevent that fermentation of the heart, which *too* much ſenſibility is apt to create." Then kiſſing her hand, by way of farewel, I led her to the coach.

When I returned to my Emmeline, I found her diſſolved in tears. Alarmed at her unexpected grief, I tenderly preſſed to be informed of the cauſe.

"Other women, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe, as I wiped away her tears, "weep becauſe they are not happy; but my tears flow from the exceſs of happineſs. In the few minutes you have been abſent, I have taken a ſhort review of the few paſt weeks. The wonderful mercies which have ſucceeded the depths of deſpair, are ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on my mind, and they frequently preſs ſo hard upon me, that I have only tears left to ſpeak my grateful joy. That tremendous moment which preſented you a bleeding breathleſs corſe to my horror-ſtruck fancy——" She could not proceed. I caught her to my heart, and entreated her, for both our ſakes, to ſuppreſs if poſſible thoſe ſenſa-

tions which muſt prove a ſource of affliction to both, ſhould they throw a veil of ſadneſs over thoſe charming ſpirits which added ſweetneſs to every hour of my life. And believe me, my dear creature," added I, "though the joy to find myſelf ſo tenderly beloved is truly grateful to my feelings, yet I muſt chide you for thus indulging thoughts ſo detrimental to yours."

"Spare me but this once," ſaid ſhe, raiſing her eyes with ineffable ſweetneſs, "and you ſhall control every future thought of my life, which does not interfere with the gratitude I owe to Heaven, for having thus wonderfully reſtored you to my prayers; but indeed as often as the thought occurs, I am very, very much oppreſſed." She pauſed, and a heavy ſigh enſued. As I hung over her, I thought ſhe would have fainted.

I made uſe of every tender argument my fond ſoul could ſuggeſt, to urge her to ſuppreſs ſenſations to which her ſtrength was ſo inadequate. She heard me without reply. Tears at length having eaſed her boſom of the violence of its emotions, ſhe exclaimed, "Your Emmeline, my dear Lord, has a grateful heart, though it takes this ungracious manner of expreſſing the ſenſe it has of your goodneſs;

goodneſs; for the hourly obligations you are laying it under preſs ſo hard upon it, that tears become the only language by which its ſenſations can be expreſſed."

"Dear tender-hearted girl," ſaid I, kiſſing her hand, "but remember there is a pathetic tenderneſs in your tears, whatever may be the cauſe from which they reſult, that muſt ever be productive of painful inquietude to me; therefore, bleſt as we are at length in the full poſſeſſion of each other's affection, let us look upon our paſt dangers as events deſigned by a wiſe Providence to make our preſent ſatisfaction as perfect as falls to the lot of humanity: therefore, my ſweet love, never wound my feelings more by mentioning obligations you owe my family, when you have been the bleſſed means of conferring happineſs on us all. Have you not been the joy and delight of my father and ſiſter? and do you not complete all the ſatisfactions of my life? Then let us, from this moment, keep in view what our father has ſo often told us, that the grand art of paſſing through life comfortably, is never to create to ourſelves imaginary evils."

As ſoon as my tender ſoothings had called up the ſmiles of good humour to reſume their place on every charming

feature, I propoſed to her an airing to Kenſington-gardens.

Would you believe it, George, the bluſhing angel ſtarted at my propoſal, as ſhe had no female friend to accompany her.

I rallied her, that ſhe was grown ſo faſhionable a wife already, as to be aſhamed to be ſeen abroad with her huſband.

She frankly confeſſed ſhe had been ſo long uſed to look upon me in the light of a being to whom propriety forbid her granting indulgences like thoſe for which I now ſolicited, that ſhe was not aware of the right I had then to propoſe it. She moſt cheerfully acquieſced.

To tell you the truth, George, mere vanity prompted me to make the propoſal; for I was deſirous of ſhewing my wife to half of my acquaintance, whom I did not doubt but ſo fine a morning would draw to the gardens.

I was not deceived, and I had the ſatisfaction to hear her admired by as many as gazed upon her.

Lord Layton at length preſented himſelf. He accoſted us in his uſual ſarcaſtical tone, and, ſtaring my angel out of countenance, aſked me how I dared venture to intrude on the public that ugly

ugly witch who was hanging on my arm?

"Why really, my Lord," interrupted I, "time has nearly reconciled me to her deformities; and though I confeſſed myſelf ſtill bewitched by them, yet I would not for the world have the ſpell broken which ſtill enchants my ſenſes."

"It would have been well for the world, Ormſley, had ſhe only faſcinated yours; for every ſoul is touched who has been under the baneful influence of her ſaucer eyes. There is Sir George Warren, ſo ſpell-bound by this ſorcereſs, that he is going to make the tour of the continent, hoping to find ſome gentle fair one to touch the enchanted zone which binds his ſenſes. As for myſelf, you are a pretty devil, Ormſley, to have let me fall into the ſame ſnare; for do you think I would have ſuffered my paſſions to have galloped after a ſhadow, had you informed me you were in poſſeſſion of the ſubſtance?"

"I proteſt, my Lord," ſaid I, "it was more than I knew of at the time; for this Circe had ſo myſteriouſly enveloped the ſecrets of her boſom, that, ſpight of the ſtricteſt inveſtigation I could make, I ſhould never have gotten poſſeſſion of her ſentiments, had ſhe not been

been compelled to make the effort for the preſervation of my life."

"And pray, Madam," ſaid his Lordſhip, addreſſing her, "don't you think you deſerve to be ſeverely chaſtiſed for ſuch conduct?"

"Surely not, my Lord," replied ſhe, "ſince my conduct was the reſult of duty; a duty which ought always to have a ſuperior claim to love."

"By my ſoul, Madam," interrupted he, "that's prettily ſaid enough; in time I may be brought to think better of you; the prattle of your tongue leſſens the deformity of your features; there is a meanneſs in bearing malice, which I deſpiſe; and now my heart has nothing to hope—why, it has nothing to fear, and ſo I'll dine with your Lord to-day: ha! what ſay you?"

"My wife, my dear Layton, governs my houſe," ſaid I; "and if you wiſh to dine with me, your application muſt be made to her."

"Then I know I ſhan't ſucceed," returned he; "I never aſked her but one favour, and that ſhe refuſed me in the moſt ungracious manner. I ſee by your bluſhes, Madam, you have a full recollection of the ſubject to which I allude."

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"It is not polite in you, then, my Lord," replied my Emmeline, "to advert to ſubjects which can be remembered only with confuſion."

"Well," ſaid his Lordſhip, "if I muſt not dine with you to-day, I will to-morrow."

"Pardon me, my Lord, to-morrow is Sunday."

"Why, what the devil, are not people to eat as well on Sundays as other days?"

"Very true, my Lord," ſaid my incomparable girl; "but heads of families ſhould eat in their reſpective houſes, to ſet an example of ſobriety to thoſe beneath them."

"What the deuce! is your wife a Methodiſt, my Lord?"

"Whatever may be her religious ſentiments," returned I, "I hope in time I ſhall receive them all into my practice. If to be a Methodiſt is to approach as nearly the angelic nature as matter can to ſpirit, then I believe my dear Lady Ormſley may be juſtly ſtyled one. A young woman virtuouſly educated, my Lord, is a very different ſpecies of being from the light frothy damſels with whom you and I have been accuſtomed to converſe, who afford us only a temporary amuſement, by keeping our paſſions

ſions in play: but we can only derive permanent happineſs by our connections with virtuous women. A vain woman has no affections but as they tend to ſelf; whilſt a woman of true refinement is alone capable of feeling affections which do honour to the human heart."

"Whew, whew!" whiſtled he. "What the devil, Ormſley, are you got prancing above the clouds already? I ſuppoſe you intend your Lady to act in a double capacity, and, to the character of a wife, unite that of domeſtic chaplain."

"You are right, my Lord," returned I; "for this dear creature was the firſt preacher who ever awakened my mind to ſerioufneſs, and convinced me there was a charm in religion which gives an elevation to the ſpirits and a ſettled gaiety to the temper, which I have never found in the ſociety of the moſt confirmed libertines. And remember, my Lord, when I have eſtabliſhed a chaplain in my family, I ſhall not divert him from fulfilling the duties of his function, by hunting, drinking, or playing backgammon with me."

"Poor devil!" rejoined he; "then I find 'tis all over with you as to this world."

"So far from it, my Lord," returned I gaily, "that I look upon myſelf as juſt beginning

beginning to taſte the pleaſures of it. I have only changed my purſuits after happineſs, not reſigned them; for as I have taken upon me to play the part of a domeſtic huſband, it is time I ſhould relinquiſh that of the roving libertine."

"But prithee, Ormſley, how will you ſtand the laugh of your acquaintance on making the exchange?"

"That man, my Lord," ſaid I, "who ſtands in awe of his own conſcience, will look upon the idle ridicule of his acquaintance with the utmoſt compaſſion, if not contempt. If I were to tell you the requeſt my pretty wife here made me the day after our marriage, it would afford laughter for all your faſhionable acquaintance for a week to come."

"I'll have it—I will upon my ſoul." cried he; "and by way of encouragement, hear the propoſals my late curſed jade of a wife made me. As her fortune was large, ſhe inſiſted ſhe ſhould have as many footmen to attend her chair as a Ducheſs; that I ſhould pay her debts without ever offering to reproach her, becauſe her temper was too mild and gentle to bear reproof; and that every Sunday evening ſhe might have the fineſt card-aſſembly in town."

"Bravo!" ſaid I; "and what was the reſult of all this?"

"Why, faith, you and all the town know the reſult—that the parliament hath been graciouſly pleaſed to rid me of a fine Lady, whoſe appetites were debauched by faſhion, and whoſe principles were vitiated by every ſpecies of libertiniſm.—Come, my Lord, after this noble declaration of my ſweet Lady's, I think I have a right to demand the ſubject of your's."

My dear Emmeline entreated me, then, not to expoſe her. But I told her I was bound in honour to comply with his Lordſhip's requeſt, and that her ſentiments ought to be made known for their ſingularity, otherwiſe my character might be tainted with the imputation of parſimony. "Her firſt requeſt then, my Lord, was, that ſhe might be indulged to dreſs with her uſual ſimplicity, unleſs occaſionally, when it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould appear in a ſtyle of faſhionable elegance ſuitable to the character of my wife; and as to her pin-money, ſhe begged I would deſtroy the inſtrument by which the law conveyed it to her: but on my perſiſting ſhe ſhould keep it, ſhe ſaid ſhe could only do it on condition of being appointed my almoner; and promiſed,

promiſed, at the cloſe of every year, to bring me a faithful liſt of all the children of ſorrow whoſe griefs had been removed by a timely ſupply from ſo noble a ſtipend." "As to the brilliant decorations of dreſs," continued ſhe, "I ſhall ever feel them as an inſult to my happineſs; for when I was lately contemplating the ſuperb preſents you had made me, the news arrived of your death." Here ſhe wiped away a tear which would preſent itſelf. "And now," continued ſhe, "I come to make my laſt and great requeſt; a requeſt which not only concerns my happineſs in this life, but is of the higheſt importance towards my obtaining a better. It is, my dear Lord, that you will permit me to keep the Sunday agreeable to the intention of the Great Author of it; for when my mind was firſt taught the performance of religious duties, it was inſtructed to pay the higheſt regard to a day ſo ſacred. As I grew up, reaſon and reflection ſerved to cultivate thoſe principles which early inſtruction had planted. Obedience, my Lord, to divine diſpenſations, is the beſt illuſtration of the Chriſtian name; and ſhall preſuming mortals, then, dare break that ordinance of the Great God of heaven and earth, who hath ſaid, 'Remember the

the Sabbath-day to keep it holy?' Dare I violate, then, this divine command, and yet hope for his mercy, when the gay parade of life muſt give place to the ſilent manſions of the dead? If by following the lead of young women in my ſituation, I make your houſe a ſcene of riot and folly, by admitting cards, concerts, and the whole groupe of vices to which the doors of people of faſhion are more particularly opened on that day, I ſhould ſet but a miſerable example to that family over which you have been pleaſed to place me. Think, my Lord, beſides the catalogue of my own ſins, how it muſt be ſwelled at the great day of account, to have thoſe of a large family added to it, who, looking up to their ſuperiors for precedents, find a ſanction in them for all their vices. Pardon me, my good Lord, if I have been too ſerious. I have almoſt done. I know you would defend my life at the hazard of your own. I hope I ſhall never put you to the trial. I only call upon you to ſupport me, in caſe my heart ſhould incline to evil, from being borne down by the torrent of faſhionable levities, which ſo fatally ſpread themſelves over this great town. I do not expect, my Lord, from the manner of your education,

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and mode of life, you ſhould at once eſtabliſh opinions ſo heterodox to the eſtabliſhed creed of men of quality; but only by lending me your protection, enable me to perſevere in mine: and ſhould you ever find my temper ſoured by the diſcharge of my religious duties, your fortune injured, or your honour endangered, then caſt me off for ever."

"Well," cried his Lordſhip, "and what was the reſult of all this?"

"Why," added I, "I caught her to my heart, and there held her cloſer than ever, vowing myſelf a convert to her doctrine; and that ſhe who was ſo careful of my honour, ſhould, from that moment, be inveſted with a right to direct my conſcience alſo."

"I muſt, I will dine with you to-day," interrupted he; "for faith your divine prattler, Ormſley, adorns Religion with ſo many touching graces, that I ſhould like to be better acquainted with her."

"And as long as you confine your converſation to Religion, my Lord, I ſhall not be afraid to truſt you with her; beſides I will get her to explain to you, thoſe parts of your catechiſm of which you are entirely ignorant, as hitherto you have only ſtudied that part which relates to the Devil and all his works, the pomps and

and vanities of this wicked world, and all the ſinful luſts of the fleſh."

He ſmiled;—and as I led my Emmeline to the chariot, he whiſpered me, "Curſe me, Ormſley, but your wife is the firſt woman breathing for whom I ever felt any thing like a virtuous affection. I would rather live virtuouſly on 500l. *per* year with ſuch a woman, than enjoy the moſt brilliant fortune with the higheſt-bred woman about town—'Tis certainly this diſcreet connexion which ſhe has made with the lady Religion, that gives her this pre-eminence over all the women I know."

"I am entirely of your Lordſhip's way of thinking," replied I; "but adieu for the preſent: we will diſcuſs this ſubject more at large after dinner."——We took leave, as I ſhall of you, my dear friend.

ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXXI.

To the ſame.

IF I did not ſee a languor hang over my Emmeline's ſpirits on the departure of our friends, I *thought* I did; which

to me was juſt the ſame thing. I propoſed to her to make an excurſion for a few days, as ſhe has yet ſeen very little of that country of which ſhe is ſo bright an ornament. She appeared pleaſed at my propoſal, and accordingly we ſet off, viſiting every place as we paſſed, which travellers have deemed moſt worthy of inveſtigation. My pretty one at length beginning to look upon me as a leſs formidable object in the character of a huſband, than that of a lover, was all gaiety and good humour; and tranſported was I to ſee that vivacity once more return, which ſome late melancholy tranſactions ſeemed to have driven from her mind. But the object from which ſhe propoſed to enjoy the moſt enthuſiaſtic rapture was Shakeſpeare's cliff. On our arrival at Dover her expectations were defeated, for that day at leaſt; a violent gale of wind aroſe, and the ſea began to roll mountains high; as it was an awful ſpectacle to which her eyes had not been accuſtomed, ſhe took her ſtand at the dining-room window, from whence ſhe could obſerve the boiſterous ſtruggle of billow fighting againſt billow. Several packets at length appeared, which ſeemed to have great difficulty to weather the ſtorm: the ſafety of the paſſengers now took entire poſſeſſion of the mind

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of my beloved. I wiſhed to remove her from a ſcene, to the terrors of which I ſaw the powers of her mind were very inadequate; but my eloquence proved ineffectual: I could not reaſon down my fears, while the ſubject which occaſioned them exiſted. The dear perverſe girl would judge for herſelf, till ſhe dropped almoſt ſenſeleſs on my boſom, at ſeeing a wave furiouſly driving againſt a veſſel which began to make to ſhore—ſhe concluded it for ever loſt. I concealed her ſweet face from being again witneſs of a ſcene which to her carried ſo much horror; but which in effect was very common: however, in a few minutes I had the ſatisfaction to allay her fears, by telling her that the ſhip was ſafe; and if ſhe would promiſe me in future to ſhew more fortitude when occaſion ſhould call for it, I would indulge her with the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the paſſengers land. She expreſſed her thanks by a look of ſuch ineffable ſweetneſs, I ſhall never forget it.

We had not taken our ſtation long at the window, when a violent uproar took place before the door, on the ſervants of the inn refuſing admittance to a lady whom two ſailors bore along, becauſe they were ſure that ſhe was dead; as they could not poſſibly deny this aſſertion, the

the conteſt became ſo extremely clamorous I could hear no more; but ſeeing one of my ſervants among the crowd, I beckoned him to come up; he ſaid he did not believe the poor lady was quite dead, but ſhe ſeemed to have no friend to ſtand up for her, and therefore muſt ſoon expire if ſomebody did not come to her relief.

"Now, now, my dear Lord," ſaid my beſt love, claſping her hands, "what a delightful opportunity preſents itſelf to exerciſe the duties of humanity!"

"Which I will embrace with the utmoſt ſatisfaction," ſaid I; "provided in my abſence you will promiſe not to ſuffer the force of apprehenſion to overpower the feelings of your mind."

"Fly! fly!" cried ſhe, "and I will promiſe to do all you wiſh. Conſider, the approaches of death are ſudden; and the operations of friendſhip may not come in time to ward off the attack."

I haſtened down, and found that the conteſt between the people of the houſe and the ſailors, had ariſen to great violence.—I demanded a moment's ſilence; it was no ſooner granted me, than I addreſſed them in a few words, to which I added the ſight of my purſe, which ſeemed to be poſſeſſed of ſuch a magical ten-

dency, as inſtantly conciliated all parties to each other; the mob retired, the people of the inn diſcovered ſtrong ſymptoms of a growing humanity; and the poor lady, inſenſible of the clamour ſhe had occaſioned, was laid upon a bed in a back room, and every cordial was offered to her that ſeemed moſt likely to recall the fleeting breath back to its manſion. Her figure was extremely emaciated, her eyes were cloſed and ſunk, her cheeks fallen in, and her lips bore no evidence that the life-blood would ever more re-animate them: though ſhe was in an undreſs, yet every thing about her wore an air of faſhion. Over a very large cap of muſlin, which nearly ſhaded her whole face, ſhe had tied a white cambrick handkerchief; yet it did not prevent her auburn hair from ſtraying over her forehead, which almoſt concealed the long dark fringes of her eyes. As I contemplated this extraordinary ſpectacle, my boſom felt ſenſations beyond thoſe which common pity generally excites. The ſurgeon arrived; I then left her to his care, and that of the women, and went in ſearch of my wife, who was impatiently waiting my return.

I told her what had paſſed.

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She graced my little narrative with many tears.

In about half an hour the ſurgeon came up, as I requeſted he would; he ſaid, that the lady from loſs of blood had recovered her ſenſes; but ſhe was ſo far gone in a conſumption, that it was impoſſible ſhe could ſurvive many days; for the fatigues of the paſſage had quite exhauſted all her little ſtock of ſtrength.—"On hearing," continued he, "that ſhe was indebted for the little remnant of life which was left her, to the humanity of a ſtranger, ſhe begs to ſee you, Sir, that ſhe may thank you with her laſt breath for your goodneſs."

I would gladly have been excuſed this viſit, for I felt that there was ſomething indelicate in it; but my Emmeline joining her entreaties to thoſe of the ſurgeon, I was obliged to attend him down, where a new ſcene opened upon me, which at once engaged my pity and ſurpriſe, and gave riſe to a train of reflections which will not eaſily depart from my mind.

"Madam," ſaid the ſurgeon, as ſoon as we approached her, "Lord Ormſley, your protector, is come to know if he can be of any further ſervice to you, by informing your friends of your ſituation."

"Lord Ormſley! Lord Ormſley!" repeated ſhe, in a feeble but broken voice; "Great Heaven! and is he here to witneſs the laſt ſad ſcene of a wretch who has ſported with all the bleſſings of life; and now on the brink of the grave, can ſee nought but deſpair beyond it!"

Struck with a tone of voice I thought not unfamiliar to my ear, I looked, and looked again upon the unfortunate object from whence it proceeded, till I was fully convinced that it was Lady Carlton.—I ſtood petrified with aſtoniſhment.

"You will not ſpeak to me then, my Lord," continued ſhe; "I know you muſt deſpiſe me—yet do not refuſe to accept my thanks for your kindneſs to me, and to tell me, if you think that a ſhort but ſincere repentance can atone for a long life of guilt."

I took her hand; begged her not to attribute my ſilence to diſreſpect, but, that overcome to find her in ſo pitiable a ſituation, I had not words to expreſs my feelings; however, I urged her by every argument I could ſuggeſt, to ſubmit to the directions of the good friends ſhe had about her, which I hoped in a few days would enable her to purſue her journey.

"O name it not!" cried ſhe; "here my journey ends.—I feel the approaches of

of death with all their attending horrors! I have no right to expect the mercies of Heaven, who have ſet its moſt ſacred commands at defiance: the broken marriage vow is a ſore wound to the conſcience which is about to render up its accounts at the great audit of Heaven. How ſhall I ſcreen myſelf then from Divine vengeance? And when the everlaſting ſentence is pronounced againſt me, who ſhall ſnatch me from the devouring worm which never dies? The world then will lend no hand to ſave me; and all the pleaſures of life, which have ſeduced my ſoul, will not offer to ſnatch me from the horrors to which they have reduced me."

I entreated her to calm a violence to which her ſtrength was unequal.

"O I am all a tempeſt within!" cried ſhe. "Years of vanity, how quickly they fly! we ſhould forget they had ever been, were it not for the ſting they leave behind. I forgot to pray when proſperity ſurrounded me, and now, in my ſad reverſe of fortune, I want that energy of prayer which thoſe alone poſſeſs who ſought Divine aſſiſtance in their earlieſt years.—— Faſhion and the world were then my only deities, and at length have left me to ſtruggle in the toils into which they have enſnared my ſoul."

Here ſhe wept bitterly; ſome medicine was given to her, and I took that opportunity again to aſk her, if I ſhould ſend for any of her friends?

"Friends! friends!" repeated ſhe, "alas! I have none; I deſerve none.—For from the moment that I left my huſband with the vileſt of men, Sir Charles Willoughby, friends, fortune, all forſook me.—The reproaches of my own conſcience overpowered me; and all the flattering ſcenes the monſter painted we ſhould enjoy together on the continent, were turned into horror, on hearing that my elopement had ſo affected my huſband that it brought on the gout in his ſtomach, of which he expired. I then urged Sir Charles to fulfil his promiſe of marrying me as ſoon as he could do it legally; for I now looked upon a life of ſin with the utmoſt abhorrence: to which he replied, that if I were not ſatisfied with my preſent ſituation, we muſt part; for he never would have his pleaſures interrupted by a vapouriſh woman plagued with qualms of conſcience. And then he ſophiſtically laboured to convince me, that future puniſhments were nothing more than the idle ſuggeſtions of prieſtcraft, to keep women and children in awe; that this world alone was made for

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the full enjoyment of our wiſhes; and that if I deſired to live with him with any degree of ſatisfaction, I muſt ſteadily adopt his creed.

"Rather," ſaid I, rouſed by a kind of fury, "than adopt it, though ruin purſue me through this life, I will never relinquiſh my hopes of a better; and from this moment I will never ſee you more: for though you have greatly enſnared my ſoul, yet I will rely on the goodneſs of God, and my ſincere repentance, to redeem it.

"Upon which he hummed an air; and bowing careleſly, left me.—I never ſaw him afterwards. This quarrel was the point he aimed at; for I had been ſecretly informed, that he had been ſome time purſuing an amour in another part of the town.

"As he knew I had but little money when he left me, he ſoon after ſent me by his ſervant, 100l. ſealed up in a blank ſheet of paper. I tore it to atoms before the man's face; bidding him tell his maſter, how highly I valued his favours. I had not enjoyed a day's health ſince I left England; the agitation of my ſpirits brought on an inflammation of my lungs, which has reduced me to the ſtate you ſee. During my illneſs I parted with all

my clothes and jewels to pay my expences, reſerving barely enough to carry me to my native ſhore, to ſolicit the bounty of ſome few friends who might commiſerate my unhappy ſituation: when Heaven ſent you, my Lord, to preſerve me. The roughneſs of the paſſage I feel will ſoon render all application to my friends uſeleſs.—I ſhall not treſpaſs long, my Lord, on your goodneſs; I have abuſed it more than once; yet could you grant me one thing, it would prove a conſolation to me in my dying moments?"

I told her, be it what it would, if it came within the limits of my power, I would grant it her.

She then ſaid, if I knew of any lady who would graciouſly condeſcend to viſit a fallen ſiſter, it would be to her the deareſt ſatisfaction ſhe could ever enjoy on earth. "But tell her," ſaid ſhe, "'tis a ſincere penitent who wiſhes once more to gaze on the awful face of virtue—one who is never more to enter on a ſinful world—one whoſe ſpirit is bowed by the recollection of paſt offences, and only aſks to hear the voice of conſolation breathed from the lips of virtue."

"My wife, Lady Carlton, is the perfection of her ſex; ſhe will be happy to ſoothe

ſoothe affliction under whatſoever form it appears. She is now in the houſe, and will be pleaſed to attend you."

I then left her, and returned to Lady Ormſley, informing her of what had paſſed.

With a tear trembling in either eye, ſhe begged to attend the unfortunate Lady: "For conſider, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe, "ſhe is no longer the Lady Carlton we have once known intoxicated with the pleaſures of life, but Lady Carlton humbled by misfortune—ſubdued by pain—and, to finiſh the climax of her miſeries, a conſcience goaded by remorſe.——Come, my dear Lord," hanging on my arm, "let us haſten to do the work of Heaven—to exerciſe thoſe tender mercies towards a fellow-creature, of which in turn we may all ſtand in need."

I kiſſed away the tears which ſtrayed down her cheek as ſhe ſpoke; and ſaid I almoſt repented the promiſe that I had made Lady Carlton, leſt her tender ſpirits ſhould not be able to ſupport the interview.

"Never fear me, "ſaid ſhe, "I will be brave, indeed I will; for I feel my courage revive at the proſpect of being ſerviceable to a fellow-creature."

I could

I could not help ſmiling, and called her a conceited girl, to arrogate to herſelf the ſpirit of bravery, which none of her friends ever ſuſpected ſhe poſſeſſed. "But you ſhall give me ſome of your tea firſt, my love," ſaid I; "and by the time it is over, I hope Lady Carlton, from the medicine ſhe has juſt taken, will be better enabled to receive your viſit."

She was all ſweet compliance; and to divert her attention from thinking too much, I talked to her of our friends at Ormſley Caſtle; a ſubject which never fails of yielding her ſatisfaction.

It was about nine o'clock when I led her to the apartment of the ſick lady.

"My wife, Lady Carlton," ſaid I, "is deſirous of aſking you how you do; and aſſures me, that if her converſation can for an inſtant make you forget the ſenſe of pain, the undertaking will give her the higheſt pleaſure."

"How good ſhe muſt be then, my Lord," ſaid ſhe; "if I might be permitted to breathe one kiſs on the hand of virtue—" taking my dear Emmeline's, which ſhe preſſed to her parched lips.—"Now, now," cried ſhe, "I feel ſomething like ſafety; this is the hand of purity I claſp—the heart's-blood which warms it has received no taint from

broken marriage vows—it has ſent no huſband to ſeek an untimely grave—nor has it ever painted the guilty paſſion of unlawful love to a deſigning villain.——O Madam, be quick, and tell me if ever repentant tears can waſh the ſtains of foul pollution from the ſoul:—but do not deceive me—I am on the brink of the grave, and Hell and Eternity lie both before me."——

She uttered theſe words with ſo much vehemence, that I thought my poor girl's boaſted courage would have deſerted her before it was called into action; for I found by the tremor of her voice that ſhe was greatly affected; when ſhe replied:

"The accounts I have received from my Lord Ormſley of the preſent ſtate of your Ladyſhip's mind, leave me no doubt of the ſincerity of your repentance; in ſuch a ſtate, Madam, there is every thing to be expected from a Power who alone is all Mercy: for has he not ſaid in the ſacred book of truth, "There is more joy in Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons, &c."

"And can it be," interrupted ſhe, "that there is ſuch a promiſe given! but no wonder I ſhould not have found it, for I have neglected to ſtudy the important

truths of Chriſtianity, to peruſe only the vain title-page of the world.—O Madam, may you never know how deſtitute of every conſolation a life of ſin leaves the mind when afflictions overtake it!"

"But when the mind, Madam," ſaid my Emmeline, "is once truly ſenſible of its ſtate of degeneracy, 'tis then it becomes deſirous of penetrating into the deep myſteries of Providence; and tries by prayer—by ſupplication—by deep humility, to make an intereſt with offended Heaven. But I feel myſelf very inadequate, Madam, to talk with you on a ſubject of ſo much importance; all that I can adviſe you is, to ſeize the preſent moment of repentance, which certainly is intended as a trial to prove your faith by obedience.—A perfect ſubmiſſion to the will of Providence can alone brighten the dark moment of anguiſh, when an unfeeling world inſults over thoſe miſeries in which its falſe blandiſhments have involved its votaries."

"O that I had words," cried ſhe, graſping my dear girl's hands, "to expreſs the glow of ſatisfaction which pervades my boſom, to find that Heaven will be graciouſly pleaſed to hold out its forgiveneſs to thoſe, who, under a full conviction of their paſt errors, humbly

aſk

aſk it!—But I hope you are too good to deceive me.—I want not temporary conſolation, I only want aſſurance of future hope," eagerly fixing her eyes on my ſweet love.

"Far be it from me, Madam," returned ſhe, "in your preſent ſituation, to attempt to deceive you. I have a ſmall book here," drawing one from her pocket, "which you may read when you have recovered more ſtrength; it will ſpeak more effectually to your heart than any thing I am capable of ſuggeſting—it is called, The *Mourner Comforted*. I have been tried, and that within a few months, with the ſevereſt afflictions;" fixing her eyes upon me; "I read it then, and I ſtill continue to read it; that in the hour of proſperity I may not forget from what Power I derived conſolation in my day of adverſity."

"Ah! Madam," interrupted this unfortunate woman, "but our ſituations differ widely: when ſorrows overtook you, they were not aggravated by crimes againſt which Heaven has denounced the ſevereſt vengeance: for you had broken no vow—your ſpotleſs ſoul was not enſlaved by forbidden ſin—in your afflictions you had all the comforts to expect which could be derived from Religion—

while

while I—" wringing her hands with the bittereſt anguiſh, ſhe ſunk back on her pillow, unable to proceed.

I thought this a favourable moment to withdraw my pretty preacher from a ſcene which I began to be apprehenſive would oppreſs her tender ſpirits too much; and adviſed her to retire till her Ladyſhip had recovered ſtrength ſufficient to renew the converſation; when ſhe intreated me in a whiſper not to inſiſt upon it.

"You will not leave me then," ſaid the poor creature, recovering herſelf—"I ſhall not trouble any body long; my ſtate of probation draws apace to a concluſion—the blood already begins to creep ſluggiſhly through my veins—I do not aſk to live—I only pray to be forgiven." Then fixing her eyes in an ejaculatory manner, ſhe continued for ſome time ſilent; at length, in a faint voice, ſhe aſked, if the luxury of a little cold water was not too great an indulgence for one who felt herſelf unworthy of it?" The miſtreſs of the houſe gave her a glaſs, which ſhe drank eagerly; ſoon after, profuſe ſweats ran down her face, which my compaſſionate Emmeline wiped off with her handkerchief, while ſhe ſeemed unconſcious of the ſtreaming of her own tears.

Com-

Comparing my paſt ſituation with this woman to the preſent, I felt myſelf ſo extremely agitated, that I had not a word to offer; and all that I was capable of doing was, inwardly to bleſs Heaven, who no doubt ſent my Emmeline to me, to teach my ſoul the beauties of virtue at the very period when the unhappy creature before me, ſituated as we then were, might have fallen the victim of my licentious attacks.—Had it been ſo, great Heaven! what pen could now paint the horrors of my condition?

A long ſilence now enſued, which I hoped would be productive of much good, but I was miſtaken; for on taking a nearer ſurvey of her once beautiful face, I found her ſo changed, that I began to ſuſpect the viſitation of death was near. I made an attempt to withdraw my wife from ſo painful a ſituation; but ſtill ſhe clung cloſer to the wretched cauſe of her diſtreſs.

Lady Carlton at length opening her eyes, fixed them upon me, and obſerving my diſtreſs, ſhe aſked me, if I would forgive her for all the anxiety ſhe had in her dream of vanity given me? I told her, and with truth, all that had ever paſſed between us of an unpleaſant kind, had long ſince been forgotten by me.

"Then

"Then now, I think," ſaid ſhe, "my great concern in life is over. I have been a wife, yet have neither a fond huſband, or affectionate children, to drop a tear over my grave.—I have parents, but they renounce the child, who, for want of their pious inſtructions at a time when the infant mind is moſt liable to take a laſting impreſſion, is at length expoſed, by their negligence, to ſuffer all the miſeries into which a life of guilt muſt ſooner or later plunge its votaries.—But I have here found friends, I bleſs Heaven, that have robbed Death of his fierceneſs; I feel very differently to what I did before this dear Lady approached and told me, that Heaven will be graciouſly pleaſed to accept the prayers of a penitent: new dawnings of hope at length ſeem to have ſet the horrors of Death at defiance—and the coldneſs of my heart begins to chill the burning fever which has been for ſome weeks almoſt devouring me."—— She then expreſſed a wiſh to be raiſed, which was no ſooner done, than, exerting her utmoſt ſtrength, ſhe threw her feeble arms round my Emmeline's neck, while her head, unable to ſupport its weight, dropped upon her boſom; and ſhe exclaimed, but inarticulately:

"Though my journey through life has been ſhort, it has been full of perils.—I have

have been ſeduced by pleaſure, and all the reward I have received for the ſacrifice of virtue, is repentance and a broken heart; thoſe are the only offerings I have to make to appeaſe offended Heaven.—I am very weary—My ſight too fails me—but yet methought I glanced the brightneſs of an angel ſomewhere here.—No, no, 'tis no deluſion, here I claſp it!" ſeizing my Emmeline's hand; "it is the pure ſpirit which has removed the veil of darkneſs from my clouded mind, and pointed out the path of Heaven to me; and God grant that thoſe who go down to the grave in *Faith*, may at the ſound of the laſt trumpet be raiſed in *Hope*—" Her voice then faultered—and after a momentary convulſive ſtruggle, ſhe bid an eternal adieu to the ſorrows of life. With this laſt effort ſhe drew my poor Emmeline, who ſupported her, down on her bed. I ſprang forward to ſeparate them; and as I raiſed my gentle love in my arms, it was difficult to tell from which body the impriſoned ſpirit had taken its flight. Agitated as I was at a cataſtrophe ſo little expected, it was with difficulty I conveyed her to her apartment; and it was near two in the morning (with the aſſiſtance of her woman, who has a heart full of the tendereſt ſenſibility) before we could

could bring her to a perfect recollection of the events which had paſſed at midnight.

From the cold languors which ſucceeded her fainting, I began to be extremely apprehenſive ſhe had contracted the diſeaſe of which the other had juſt expired. Thinking made me mad, and I know not what extravagant exceſſes I might have committed, but for Mrs. Warren's repeatedly aſſuring me, that drowſy languors frequently ſucceed to fainting fits. She was right in her conjectures, and my angel at length ſeemed to awake as from a ſleep, to my entire ſatisfaction.

I roſe early the next morning, as the adventures of the preceding evening had taken too ſtrong hold on my mind to ſuffer me to ſleep, and took a walk to enjoy the freſh breezes from the ſea, leaving word where I was to be found when my dear Lady Ormſley wiſhed for my company at her breakfaſt-table.

I had not walked long before Fortune ſeemed to make this day as pregnant with events as the former; for I ſaw a gentleman at a diſtance cloſely wrapped up in a great coat, his hat ſlouched over his eyes, and his arms folded, ſometimes ſtopping, as if loſt in thought, and then again proceeding haſtily, as if wiſhing

wiſhing to eſcape from it. On a nearer approach I diſcovered him to be Sir Charles Willoughby. I felt awkwardly at meeting a man of whoſe licentious principles I had lately ſeen ſuch fatal effects; but ſuppreſſing my indignation, I accoſted him with my wonted familiarity, ſaying, "How now, old acquaintance, what brings you hither?"

"A woman, my Lord," ſaid he, ſtarting with ſurprize; "and pray may I not aſk, what brings you hither?"

"Ditto," ſaid I; "a ſweet dear delicious creature."

"Why, I heard you were married," ſaid he; "Report then muſt be a liar; for a man of your amorous complexion, my Lord, would never waſte ſuch tender epithets on a wife."

"'Tis true, Sir Charles, I am married; but marriage, now-a-days, has no ſpell about it to inſure conſtancy; people of faſhion, you know, are above holding thoſe oaths as ſacred by which the vulgar are bound."

"D——n!" ſtriking his forehead.

"Why, what the devil diſturbs you?" ſaid I.

"What is it that diſturbs me?" returned he: "Why, all hell is in my heart, Ormſley."

"How

"How came you to have hell in your heart, Sir Charles? for having always denied the exiſtence of a Providence, I'm ſurpriſed you ſhould own yourſelf under the dominion of Satan."

"Oh!" returned he, to my utter aſtoniſhment, ſtriking his breaſt, "whatever arguments the beſt cultivated talents may urge us to advance, there is a ſting in conſcience which blunts their force, and, in a moment leaſt expected, ſtabs the creed of infidelity to the very core. I feel its point like a continual goad working within me. I find reſt nowhere. Two days ſince I quitted Paris, and only arrived here two hours ago, wiſhing, if it be not too late, to relieve part of the anguiſh I ſuffer, by performing an act of juſtice towards an unfortunate fellow-mortal."

I wiſhed him ſucceſs, and ſaid, that if he failed, there was ſome merit however in having endeavoured well.

"You know, my Lord," ſaid he, after a pauſe, "that Lady Carlton accompanied my departure from England."

"I do, Sir Charles."

"But perhaps you do not know," continued he, "that I made her a ſolemn promiſe of marriage as ſoon as a divorce could take place. The death of her huſband

huſband ſoon after, gave me ample room to fulfil my promiſe, but I always found means to evade it. Cut to the heart at my unſeaſonable delay, the inquietudes of her mind began to make ſad ravages on her health. She felt the deepeſt contrition for her paſt errors, which I endeavoured to turn into ridicule. A ſermonizing miſtreſs you know, my Lord, is a deadly poiſon to a ſenſual appetite; and our quarrels now ran as high as if we had been really man and wife. I ſtamped, and ſwore ſhe never loved me; if ſhe had, ſhe would not think of embroiling all our tête-à-têtes with weak womaniſh fears of future puniſhments for paſt pleaſures.

"From this moment, then," ſaid ſhe, "I renounce you for ever, whatever may be my portion of miſery in this life." With a ſarcaſtic ſneer I thanked her for my diſmiſſion from a curſed bondage, of which I was heartily tired: then bowing with an air of the moſt perfect indifference, left her, and fled, as I believed, to gentler bands: but, far from finding the ſatisfaction I expected, the idea of my poor abandoned Harriet mixed itſelf with every enjoyment. I grew almoſt diſtracted, when I found, from a perſon who had ſeen her ſome time before, that

ſhe

ſhe was at once aſſaulted by ſickneſs, poverty, and penitence; my ſervant not having informed me that ſhe tore the bills I ſent her for preſent uſe, ſhe bidding him to tell me never to inſult her miſeries more by ſuch wretched bribes.

"On hearing this I made every poſſible haſte to our old lodging; but all the intelligence I could get of her was, that, although in a dying ſtate, ſhe was gone over to England, having parted with all her clothes and ornaments to defray the expences of her journey. And here I am, overwhelmed with the extremeſt anxiety, in purſuit of her."

"Then Sir Charles," rejoined I, "I have it in my power to put a ſtop to your further inquiry: Lady Carlton is in my poſſeſſion."

"The devil ſhe is!" cried he fiercely. "So, then, all her affected remorſe ends at laſt in d—d hypocriſy. It is clear as the light," continued he, grinding his teeth, "ſhe told me truth once on my provoking her, that you were the only man ſhe ever fondly loved; though I had too good an opinion of myſelf then to give credit to ſuch an aſſertion. But I muſt inſiſt, my Lord, on your ſurrendering her immediately to me."

"That

"That I ſhall not do, Sir Charles. I am not eaſily intimidated."

He looked black as vengeance. At that moment my ſervant came to tell me his lady waited breakfaſt.

"Good morning t'ye, Sir Charles; you know a lady's commands are indiſputable with me."

"You are going then to Harriet," cried he, graſping my arm: "but have a care, my Lord, that the repaſt ſhe prepares for you be not ſprinkled with the blood of one of us. I have a brace of piſtols here in my pocket."

"Then prithee, Sir Charles, there let them reſt; for I had the contents of one lately lodged within me, which my ſtomach found very hard of digeſtion. Not to trifle with you, I am going to breakfaſt with my wife. I cannot invite you to partake of our repaſt; ſhe was very ill all night, and quite unfit to ſee company." I would not for the world have introduced to her a man for whom ſhe had juſtly conceived ſuch an abhorrence. "But hark'ee, Sir Charles, that you may take your coffee in tranquillity, I give you my word of honour, not to attempt ſeeing Lady Carlton in the mean time; and I will meet you an hour hence, on this very ſpot, or elſewhere if you like

like it better, and tell you every ſyllable I know of her."

"Beware you do not trifle with me, then," ſaid he; "for I have a tempeſt raging in my ſoul, a preſentiment of ſomething nature recoils at. But tell me, is ſhe ill?" "Very ill, indeed, then," returned I; "and when you know the ſervices my wife and I have been ſo fortunate as to render her, you will never have reaſon more to look on me in the light of a rival."

"For one hour then, my Lord, I muſt ſuſpend curioſity, however painful."

"Not a minute longer, Sir Charles," taking out my watch; "ſo adieu for the preſent." I then returned to Lady Ormſley, who looked extremely pale and languid, from the ſhock her ſpirits had received the preceding evening. I told her of the rencontre I had juſt had with Sir Charles Willoughby; of the appointment I had made with him; and begged that, as ſoon as our conference was over, ſhe would permit me to remove her from a houſe which had been productive of ſo much inquietude to her.

"Inquietude of mind, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe, "muſt be forgotten, when it gives the heart ſuch a leſſon of inſtruction. Yet, before we go, I have a very great

great favour to beg of you; but you muſt promiſe me to grant it before I name it."

"I am ſadly afraid then, my ſweet love, your requeſt is of ſuch a nature, it will be prudent in me not to comply with it; and that it is of a nature which may prove injurious to yourſelf; otherwiſe you know your will ſo entirely governs mine, that I can refuſe you nothing. However, ſpeak your wiſhes, and then I ſhall be better enabled to judge how far I can comply with them."

After much heſitation, ſhe confeſſed ſhe had an ardent deſire to ſee Lady Carlton before we left the houſe; "for," continued ſhe, "the ſight of her, in her preſent ſituation, will preach a more powerful lecture to the proſperous and happy, than the beſt written treatiſe of morality is capable of doing: for though ſhe ſpeaks not, yet ſhe ſilently tells the ſurviving ſpectator, that all the allurements of beauty, the inſolence of rank and power, the affluence of fortune, the brilliancy of wit, and the turbulence of vanity, muſt all end in *death*."

"Why then, my dear creature," ſaid I, "as you ſeem ſo perfect a miſtreſs of all ſhe can teach, I muſt put a negative on your requeſt; for a boſom alive to the ſoft pleadings of humanity, like yours,

wants not to be further ſoftened by ſcenes of diſtreſs, to which the ſtrength of your body is ſo unequal. And as to your courage, of which you ſo loudly boaſted yeſterday, I can have no further dependence upon it; for, on ſeeing it called into action, I find a mere baby has as much."

I was proceeding, when the report of a piſtol reached our ears. My dear Emmeline, as if electrified by it, ſprang from her ſeat, and involuntarily threw her arms round my neck. Her head ſunk upon my ſhoulder as ſhe exclaimed, "O tell me, before I am dead with terror, whether the contents of that horrid inſtrument of death have reached your heart." I muſt tell you, George, that ſince my accident ſhe has never heard any exploſion of gun-powder but it has thrown her gentle ſpirits into the extremeſt agitation.

She trembled from head to foot. I could feel her heart, as I held her to mine, beat ſo rapidly through her habit, that I began to be very apprehenſive that when the violence of her emotions ſubſided, they might be ſucceeded by faint languors, like thoſe ſhe felt the preceding evening.

I had but juſt convinced her of the unreaſonableneſs of her fears, when three of my ſervants ruſhed into the room, followed by my wife's woman, with countenances on which were depictured the moſt lively expreſſions of terror, and exclaiming at the ſame inſtant, "O, my Lord, my Lord—there is dreadful work below; — Sir Charles Willoughby—— Mr. Wilſon deſires you would make haſte down."

A dreadful preſentiment now took hold of my mind. "Warren, take care of your lady." I was haſtening away, when my dear Emmeline hung upon my arm, crying, "No, pray, my Lord, do not go; there are piſtols below, they may find you out again. Let me go; they cannot hurt me, if you are ſafe." She was too much flurried to proceed, but ſtill hung upon me with looks of agonizing tenderneſs.

'Tis well I had a character of ſome dignity to ſupport before my wife and ſervants, or in the then agitation of my mind I could not have extricated myſelf with any degree of firmneſs.

Here Wilſon ran in crying, "For heaven's ſake, my Lord, come down, or all will be too late. Sir Charles begs to ſee you before he dies."

After entreating my Emmeline not to alarm herſelf, I hurried down, attended by my blundering blockheads, who had been the occaſion of ſuch cruel alarms to their lady.

They led to the apartment where lay Lady Carlton, ſurrounded by all the ſilent parade of death; and acroſs her boſom, weltering in his blood, lay the man who had made death welcome to her, after he had robbed her of her virtue—Sir Charles Willoughby. Her pallid cheeks were ſtained with his blood, and the white covering which was thrown over her was likewiſe ſprinkled with this crimſon libation. Would it could atone for the enormity of the crime for which he fell!

"Is this done like a Chriſtian, Sir Charles?" ſaid I, wreſting from him the piſtol with which he perpetrated the horrid deed.

"No, my Lord; on the contrary," ſaid he, "'tis badly done, in caſe it ſhould not be effectual."

I ordered a couple of ſurgeons to be ſent for, and deſired the people who ſurrounded him to help to bear him to another room: but this he ſtrenuouſly oppoſed, and deſired every body would quit the room, myſelf excepted.

"Forgive

"Forgive me, dear Ormſley," ſaid he, as ſoon as we were alone, "for the diſtreſs I ſee you feel on my account. You have ſeen me in my happieſt hours—you now behold me, in the reverſe, a wretch curtailed of life by his own hand. No bright ideas now irradiate the mind which a life of ſin has involved in darkneſs."

"The mind once convinced, Sir Charles, of its errors, will ſoon find itſelf in a way to ——"

"Perhaps it might," interrupting me; "but I fear I have only time to tell you, that as ſoon as you left me, the tempeſt in my mind became more outrageous by the new doubts to which it became a prey, thinking that you had only availed yourſelf of this hour to offer this departed ſpirit the means of eſcaping from me, in caſe ſhe ſhould refuſe to ſee me. Haunted with this conjecture, I purſued you at a diſtance, and ſaw you enter this houſe. I ſoon followed you, and found on inquiry you were really at breakfaſt with your lady. I thought this a favourable opportunity to get an interview with my Harriet, and to offer her all the reparation it was now in my power to make her.

" I addreſſed myſelf to a waiter, begging him to introduce me to the ſick lady who came hither laſt night from France. The fellow looked aſtoniſhment, but ſpoke not. What I had only ſuſpected before, was now confirmed. I doubted not you were both in league together. Again I inſiſted he ſhould conduct me to the lady. He ſaid he could not, for you had given ſtrict orders nobody ſhould be admitted to her apartment, the key of which he held in his hand.

" The fiends of hell now raged in my boſom. I drew a piſtol from my pocket, directed it to the fellow's head, ſaying, he was a dead man if he did not open the door inſtantly. This menace procured me the key: my trembling hands with difficulty applied it to the lock. The door opened: I looked for my Harriet, when this ſad ſpectacle preſented itſelf to my terror-ſtruck ſoul. I ordered the waiter to retire and ſhut the door.

" I began to doubt the evidence of my ſenſes. For a further confirmation I advanced to the bed-ſide. I could doubt no longer; for though death had ſet his ſeal on the vital powers of the once unfortunate Harriet, and for ever cloſed were thoſe eyes on which I had ſo often

gazed

gazed with unſpeakable delight, had I wanted further proof of her identity, there lay a letter on her pillow, which I conclude muſt have been found about her by the ſervants when they thus prepared her to meet the laſt ſad receptacle which muſt ſoon conſign to duſt and aſhes what was ſo lately the pride of health and flower of beauty.

"I took it up; I ſaw it directed to myſelf; you will find it ſomewhere about; but no matter; the contents are ſtrong on my mind. Theſe, my Lord, are her words:

'Though there is nothing leſs than divine compaſſion can redeem my ſoul from the ſtate of perdition into which you have plunged it, yet I forgive you; and the laſt wiſh of the dying Harriet Carlton is, that timely repentance may enable you to meet a death-bed in confidence of future mercy.'

"Deſpair at reading ſuch a ſcroll fired my brain. I know not how long my faculties were ſuſpended; but when they returned, I ſtooped down, I kiſſed the ſad ſpectacle my vices had brought thus early to the grave. I darted again on my feet. I continued gazing on her, till the fiends of hell aſſaulted my ſoul. Unconſcious of the act till it was too late, I

turned the piſtol, which I ſtill held, to my own breaſt; and, O! Ormſley, here I feel the dreadful contents lodged near my heart, though I have but little ſenſation of pain; perhaps I am paſt it, for I am very faint. If I die, let the licentious learn from my example, that a life of guilt will ſurely end in a death of ſhame."

Here the ſurgeon arrived. Sir Charles begged he might not be removed to another apartment, and only requeſted they would lay him by the ſide of his loſt Harriet, where he might gaze on her till the freezing powers of death, which now began to ice his blood, ſhould for ever cloſe his eyes in total darkneſs.

This argument I ſtrongly oppoſed, and had him inſtantly carried to another room. He was in ſpeechleſs agony when he ſurveyed, for the laſt time, his departed love.

Having ſo lately been in a ſimilar ſituation, I did not find my mind firm enough to attend his examination; and as I could not be of the leaſt aſſiſtance if I had, I took that opportunity of returning to my Emmeline, who, oppreſſed by terror, anxiouſly waited my return; but it was not in my power to remove it. I could only tell her in general terms, that

Sir

Sir Charles was living, and that whilſt there was life, there was hope; and in caſe he ſhould ſurvive, he diſcovered ſo much contrition for his raſhneſs, that I could venture to affirm, the world would ſee him a very reformed man.

"I hope ſo, too," ſaid ſhe; "but I wiſh, my dear Ormſley, his reformation had taken place before he had exhibited a ſcene of horror which I fear will affect your ſpirits too much."

I told her I was perfectly well, and had only apprehenſions on her account; for men felt not ſo acutely the incidents to which human nature is liable, as her ſex did; and therefore, if ſhe were not too much weakened by the exceſs of her feelings the preceding night, as ſoon as I had made Sir Charles another viſit, I ſhould be glad to take her from a houſe wherein ſhe had experienced ſo much anxiety.

I then went to Sir Charles, who was very ſenſible, and very grateful for the care and attention I expreſſed about him. I took that opportunity to urge him to do every thing to forward his recovery. He promiſed me faithfully he would, though at the ſame time he urged the impoſſibility of it. "I am a loſt man, my dear Lord Ormſley," ſaid he, wringing

my hand, "as to this world, and know not where I ſhall find myſelf on entering another. Loſs of blood has calmed my rage, but it has not taken the ſting from recollection:—Poor Harriet!"

As I feared talking would exhauſt his ſtrength, I told him I was purpoſing to ſet off for town immediately, as my dear Lady Ormſley had been ſo great a ſufferer in the late tranſactions, unleſs he thought my preſence would be of any real advantage to him; but that I would leave Wilſon with him, who was a fellow of tenderneſs and diſcretion, to take care of him, in caſe his own ſervants could not be depended upon.

He accepted my offer with thanks, and ſaid, he had only one favour more to beg of me, if I went to London by way of Rocheſter; that our old friend Langford was on a viſit to a gentleman in that neighbourhood, that I would ſee him, tell him of all the ſtrange miſhaps that had lately befallen him, and beg him to haſten to him to receive the laſt embrace of a dying man.

I aſſured him I would; and, to eaſe his mind of all future concern, I told him I had left orders with Wilſon to ſee that every reſpectful attention ſhould be paid to the departed. "I underſtand you perfectly,"

perfectly," ſaid he, wringing my hand; "had not a guilty paſſion fired our boſoms, I ſhould have wiſhed that the ſame grave—but decency and virtue forbid it. Leave me now," cried he; "I ſee I diſtreſs you; I'm ſorry for it. Take my laſt wiſh, dear Ormſley, that you may never ſtray from the path of virtue you are now in: and take the word of a dying friend, that every deviation you make from the line of rectitude will be ſure to add accumulated horrors to the bed of death."

I embraced him; but my choaked voice would not permit me to ſay farewel. I ruſhed out of the room, and went into an adjoining one, where I remained for more than twenty minutes, till my mind had acquired ſufficient compoſure to meet the inquiring eyes of my deareſt love, who ſoon after I was happy to convey from a ſpot where ſhe had experienced ſo many painful viciſſitudes. But the *denouement* of our adventures before we reached Berkeley-ſquare muſt be reſerved for another ſheet of paper. Adieu.

ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Same. (In Continuation.)

ABOUT five o'clock the ſame day we got to Rocheſter. I ordered poſt-horſes to ſet off immediately for Alney Park, in purſuit of Langford, when the maſter of the inn informed me, the whole family were that day gone on a party of pleaſure, and were not expected home till late at night. This *contre-tems* ſadly deranged my plan; but my ſweet Emmeline, who ſmooths every difficulty to me, ſaid, as we ſeemed to be ſo well accommodated here, we had better give up all thoughts of going to town that night, and that by the morning I might get a freſh recruit of ſpirits, which would the better enable me to go through the melancholy buſineſs I had in hand; and in the mean time I might diſpatch a ſervant to inform Mr. Langford of my intended viſit.

This plan was too well adjuſted not to be adopted. The next morning, when I was about to ſet off, I could not help expreſſing to my Emmeline the tender regret I felt at leaving her alone, and begged

begged ſhe would have her woman to ſit with her, leſt her mind ſhould revert to the melancholy ſcenes we had juſt quitted.

"I believe, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe gaily, "if the truth were known, you have other reaſons for not liking to leave me alone. Tell me now," laying her hand acroſs my boſom, "if there are not ſome ſparks of jealouſy kindling here, at the thoughts of leaving me in a houſe unprotected, where we have ſeen ſo many fine men coming in and going out all this morning? And who knows," ſweetly ſmiling upon me, "that ſpight of the virtues which you attribute to your Emmeline, you may not think her mind totally void of her ſex's vanity, and that ſhe may attempt making new conqueſts the moment ſhe ſees her watchful dragon off guard?" "You are a ſaucy charmer," ſaid I, ſnatching her to my heart; "and I ſhall be proud of every conqueſt you make in my abſence, provided at my return you make me your confidante: for who is it that ſees you, that does not admire you?"

"I ſhall try the experiment," ſaid ſhe, laughing, "as ſoon as you are gone. But how do I look to-day?" running to the glaſs. "O, horridly. Well, no matter;

matter; conceit will readily ſupply to me what nature denies. What, not yet gone! Nay, that's very condeſcending indeed (turning a curl round her finger), tamely to watch a wife decorate that perſon ſhe intends to exhibit to a rival. Come, come, my moody melancholy Henry, 'tis time for you to be gone, now you have been indulged with the pleaſure of ſeeing your wife high plumed for conqueſt!"

I did go, Montroſe, enraptured to ſee her in ſuch charming playful ſpirits; though I knew they were partly aſſumed to leſſen my chagrin at leaving her.

My expedition to Alney Park took up ſeveral hours. I have not time to relate all that paſſed between Langford and me. He returned with me to Rocheſter, and immediately took poſt-horſes for Dover.

I then was haſtening to my Emmeline, who, having ſeen me from the window, flew out of the dining-room, and met me on the ſtair-caſe, with every ſweet feature dreſſed in ſmiles. "You are come, my dear Lord," cried ſhe, "in a moſt unpropitious moment, before I have ſecured the conqueſt I had juſt begun to make."

"What means my deareſt life?"

"Mean!"

"Mean!" ſaid ſhe, "Why you had not been gone half an hour, when Fortune, propitious to my wiſhes, threw ſuch an object in my way, as ſeems formed by nature for the very purpoſe of inſpiring love. You deſired, you know, to become my confidante, if I made a conqueſt in your abſence; and I can with truth aſſure you, that ſince the day I became your's, till this moment, my heart has never wandered from its duty; and when you behold the merits of the object who has ſeduced it from its firſt attachment, you muſt pardon a weakneſs which could not reſiſt temptation.—Yet I think you could not long gaze on ſuch a blaze of perfections and retain your indifference."

"There is little fear, my beſt love," replied I, "that my heart ſhould be touched by the merits of an object which ſeems to have taken ſuch an entire poſſeſſion of yours: it is not in the power of any human being, ever to diſſolve that tender tie which binds my ſoul to yours: and therefore I dare you to the trial."

"Then," ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, "I will this inſtant put you on your defence;" opening the dining-room door.—I led her in; and was advancing to pay my reſpects to the terrific object ſhe had prepared

prepared me to meet.—But Heavens and Earth, Montroſe, what could equal my confuſion, when the Marchioneſs de Beaulieu roſe to receive me! Each ſtood petrified on ſeeing the other:—Neither retreated or advanced a ſtep. I felt my face glow—the Marchioneſs's looked pale as death. Our mutual embarraſſment proved a *coup de lumiere* to my dear girl, who exclaimed, with an admirable preſence of mind, "Pray, my Lord, give me the ſatisfaction of being aſſured that it is your amiable friend the Marchioneſs de Beaulieu to whom I have been ſo happy as to afford an aſylum, when every other apartment in the houſe was crowded with company."

I bowed, made an awkward apology, and entreated the Marchioneſs to be ſeated.

"Pardon me, my Lord," replied ſhe, in a faultering voice, "I dare not accept your offer; I am ſorry, unknowingly, thus to have obtruded myſelf upon you; yet I ſhould feel pained ſhould your dear Lady change thoſe very favourable ſentiments ſhe has been pleaſed to expreſs for a ſtranger, when ſhe knows that they were laviſhed on a perſon who has been the unfortunate cauſe of ſo much anguiſh to her."

"That

"That you were unfortunate, my dear Madam," ſaid my good girl, taking her hand and bowing upon it, "is a ſufficient plea to obliterate all remembrance of the paſt; the many virtues which adorn your mind, as I have been repeatedly told by my dear Lord Ormſley, make me deſirous to cultivate the friendſhip of a Lady ſo juſtly eſteemed by him; and if your Ladyſhip can embrace me as a friend in the character of his wife, it will enlarge the felicity I already enjoy."

The Marchioneſs roſe, threw her arms round my good girl, who cordially received her embrace; while no poor Devil could look or feel more awkwardly than I did.

"Think not, Lady Ormſley," continued the Marchioneſs, "that I am impelled to act thus by any ſudden impulſe of the mind.—Mrs. Maitland, with whom I parted but yeſterday, knows every ſecret thought of my heart; and ſhe can inform you, that the day of your marriage with Lord Ormſley ſeemed to diſburthen my mind of a load of guilt; and amidſt the general voice of congratulation my feeble joy would not have been withheld, but that I feared you would harbour doubts of its ſincerity. The termination of a law-ſuit occaſioned my

my ſudden departure from London; otherwiſe Mrs. Maitland had promiſed to procure me an interview with your Ladyſhip, that I might remove from your mind every uneaſy doubt it might ſtill harbour on my account."

"If I have been ſilent hitherto, Ladies," ſaid I, "it is not becauſe I was inattentive to the converſation, but becauſe your ſex is ſo highly ſkilled in the pathetic, that we men fear to enter the liſts with you; for we are too proud to diſcover a ſenſibility which we often want the power to control; however, I have been thinking, whether it will not be much to my advantage, to put a negative to a friendſhip in which my wife has already told me her heart is ſo much intereſted."

At that moment my ſervant entered, to ſay my horſes were ready; when my ſaucy charmer took upon her to diſmiſs him, and then turning to me, ſaid,

"Pardon me, my Lord, for countermanding your orders, becauſe I think I heard you ſay this morning, that you had no particular call to town to-day; now as the Marchioneſs can't be provided with horſes for ſome time, perhaps ſhe will indulge us with her company till the morning, when we can purſue our different routes; and in the mean-time, my Lord,

Lord, you will confer the higheſt obligation on me by giving me an opportunity to cultivate a friendſhip with a Lady ſo highly eſteemed by you and all your family, as our dear Marchioneſs. Now if you refuſe my requeſt, I ſhall think that I poſſeſs but half your confidence, and that you are not deſirous that your friends ſhall become mine."

Tears of ſurpriſe and pleaſure ſwam in the Marchioneſs's eyes.

Such was the generous method this dear girl took to reconcile all parties.—"You don't anſwer me, my Lord," continued ſhe; finding I was ſilent.

"You know, my deareſt Emmeline," ſaid I, "that I have no will which is not the reſult of yours; and if our amiable friend here," taking the Marchioneſs's hand, "will conſent to become your gueſt till to-morrow, it will afford me a very ſingular pleaſure—that of ſeeing a perfect harmony take place between the two moſt charming women in the world."

The Marchioneſs replied, that ſhe could not reſiſt an invitation, which was at once flattering to her vanity and grateful to her feelings.

Upon which I ordered my horſes back, and dinner to be prepared with the utmoſt expedition.

After

After ſome general converſation, my dear girl, under a feigned pretence of making ſome arrangements in her dreſs, apologiſed to the Marchioneſs for leaving her; ſhe confeſſed to me afterwards, that ſhe thought her abſence would give us both a handſome opportunity of explaining any thing we might wiſh to diſcloſe which related to paſt events, and thereby remove a reſerve of conduct which neither had art enough to conceal.

As ſoon then as my Emmeline had withdrawn herſelf, "I do not wonder," ſaid the Marchioneſs, "at your attachment to ſo excellent a woman.—Long may you live my Lord, a bleſſing to each other! The dangers to which you have been ſo lately expoſed have changed every purpoſe of my ſoul; and I hope you will believe me, when I tell you, that there is not that being exiſting, who takes a ſincerer part in your happineſs than I do."

"Then believe me, my dear Marchioneſs," ſaid I, "this declaration has removed every anxiety I had upon my mind. I have often told you, my attachment for my dear girl began at a very early period of my life, before my judgment could inſtruct my heart by what cauſe its ſenſations were excited. My dear

dear wife alſo has frequently expreſſed the tendereſt concern leſt you were leſs happy than you deſerve to be; and give me leave to aſſure you how greatly ſhe reveres a Virtue that could triumph over its own inclinations, and generouſly rejoice at the accompliſhment of another's."

"To be eſteemed by Lady Ormſley," returned ſhe, "after all the diſquiet I have unhappily occaſioned her, is a ſubject of the higheſt gratification; it makes me feel of the utmoſt importance to myſelf."

I then told her what had juſt paſſed between my Emmeline and me on the ſtair-caſe, previous to her introducing me to her Ladyſhip, and the caution ſhe had given me to guard my heart againſt the united efforts of Wit and Beauty that I ſhould find in the ſtranger to whom ſhe was about to introduce me.

She expreſſed herſelf much pleaſed at the compliment, and we continued chatting ſome time with that mutual eaſe which never fails to create confidence.—Among other things ſhe informed me, that Monſieur Marſin had been treated ſo indignantly by his countrymen for his baſe attack upon my life, that he had quitted France, and was wandering in exile,

exile, accompanied by his partner in iniquity, Mademoiſelle Linon.

I then enquired after many of our old friends in Paris, particularly of the Comte de Verneuil, who had long been an humble ſolicitor for her Ladyſhip's favour, and might have ſucceeded but for a friend of yours, George, who was born to be the ſubject of much inquietude to her.

She told me that the Comte loſt his wife about twelve months ſince; and then with a conſcious bluſh overſpreading her averted face, ſhe added, that the Comte had requeſted to attend her in England, but on her refuſal, he had written again to inform her, that ſhe could not prohibit his waiting her arrival on his own ſhore, in company with one of her relations, though ſhe had forbidden him to purſue her on this ſide the Channel.

I told her I knew Monſieur de Verneuil to be handſome—brave—generous; and begged her to preſent my *baiſemains* to him; and to tell him, that I had juſt ſeen a bluſh overſpread one of the fineſt faces in the world, which I hoped was a ſilent teſtimony, that the heart within had diſcernment to diſtinguiſh his merit, and would one day have the generoſity to reward it.—

"Conſider,

"Conſider, my dear Marchioneſs," ſaid I, "with what a manly yet tender affection Monſieur de Verneuil loved you, till parental authority obliged him to ſacrifice all the tender inquietudes of love, to enter into a marriage in which his heart had no ſhare."

I was not aware of the ſimilarity of their ſituations, till a ſigh which eſcaped her boſom reminded me of my imprudence. However, ſhe ſoon recovered herſelf, and ſaid, my ſentiments of Monſieur de Verneuil, flattering as they were, yet were no more than what he richly deſerved; yet ſhe would never promiſe herſelf to any man whilſt a doubt could remain on his mind that her heart was not entirely in his poſſeſſion."

"But," ſnatching her hand, and preſſing it to my lips, "I wiſh to convey a ſecret to Monſieur de Verneuil on this hand, which I fear your timidity will hinder you from diſcloſing, as I know he will often apply to it while he is ſtudying the pulſation of your Ladyſhip's heart."

At that inſtant Lady Ormſley entered; the Marchioneſs coloured, and would have withdrawn the hand I ſtill held.—I called on my Emmeline to aſſiſt me in detaining it; and told her, that I had

no

no other means of conveying a ſecret to Monſieur de Verneuil but by imprinting it upon the back of the Marchioneſs's hand.

" Pardon me, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe; " but I think the gentleman would rather have a ſecret conveyed to him by that means from your wife," kiſſing the Marchioneſs hand; " if our dear Marchioneſs will promiſe not to be jealous of the liberty I take with a gentleman, who, from the little I can collect, muſt be a very particular friend of her's."

" The Comte de Verneuil, Madam," replied the Marchioneſs, " ought never to know the honour you do him, as the firſt of my ſex afterwards muſt be lowered in his opinion."

" There is little fear of that, my Emmeline," ſaid I; " the Marchioneſs knows and feels that M. de Verneuil thinks there is but one exiſting being in the whole round of Creation, in whom all the perfections of her ſex are united, and that he has neither eyes, ears, or affections for any other."

Our chat was interrupted by dinner; and the reſt of the converſation during the day was ſuch as appeared to give ſatisfaction to all parties.—The Marchioneſs was highly

highly pleaſed with the flattering diſtinctions paid her by my Emmeline; and we parted full of the idea of renewing our acquaintance as ſoon as circumſtances would permit, which was ſo highly wiſhed for by both ladies.

On our arrival in Berkley-ſquare, I found a letter from Mr. Fenton (I forgot to inform you I ſent off an expreſs to him immediately on the death of his daughter), which for its ſingularity I ſhall incloſe, that you may ſee what are the profligate parents feelings on the death of an only child, whoſe mind, for want of early culture, became enſnared by the pleaſures of life, which brought on a premature death. With my wife's moſt affectionate regard, I have the pleaſure to ſubſcribe myſelf yours moſt ſincerely,

ORMSLEY.

LETTER XXXIII.

(Incloſed in the preceding.)

James Fenton, *Eſq.* *to Lord* Ormſley.

MY LORD,

I HAD the honour of your Lordſhip's letter, and confeſs myſelf much ſurpriſed at its contents. I have not yet ſhewn it to my wife leſt it ſhould derange her ſpirits, as ſhe has a great card party this evening, and to-morrow has a concert, at which a very ſelect party of friends are to aſſiſt.

I can venture to anſwer for her, ſhe will not wiſh to have the body of her child brought home, as ſhe has ever had a natural antipathy to the ſight of a corpſe, nay, a ſingle thought of death was always irkſome to her, as her conſtitution is very nervous; and therefore people of ton have found by experience, that a conſtant round of amuſements is the only radical cure for melancholy reflections.

As Sir Richard Carlton had made no proviſion in his will for his wife, and as the imprudent ſtep ſhe had taken had deprived her of the good opinion of ſome

of her moſt faſhionable acquaintance, I think her death was rather to be wiſhed for than regretted; and as to her remains, I beg your Lordſhip to diſpoſe of them in the manner you think beſt.

With beſt thanks to your Lordſhip for the trouble you have taken, I have the honour to remain, my Lord, your Lordſhip's moſt devoted, moſt obedient, and moſt humble ſervant,

JAMES FENTON.

LETTER XXXIV.

To Lady Ormſley.

Ormſley Caſtle.

ALTHOUGH our avocations, my deareſt ſiſter, for ſome weeks have been ſo multifarious as to have prevented much intercourſe with our pens, yet I will venture to add, it has cauſed no diminution of affection on either ſide.

Though my adventures ſince I came hither have not been of the marvellous kind, like thoſe which befel you in your late peregrinations, and though they do not depart from the common courſe of

nature, yet they have been ſuch as muſt neceſſarily form the picture of my future life; but whether the ſombrous ſhades of ſorrow or the bright teints of joy ſhall moſt prevail in its colouring, is what the beſt connoiſſeurs cannot determine; therefore we muſt leave the deciſion to time.

I think my laſt haſty ſcroll informed you, that we left Sir William Falkner at York; after which my father and I ſet off to Ormſley Caſtle, a ſituation which appeared to my then penſive mind fit to cure melancholy only by driving it ſtark mad, to which the ſtately frigidity of our ancient aunt the Lady Eleanor would much contribute; caſed as ſhe is in the ſtiff armour of anceſtry, which cannot bend to adopt the eaſy, good-humoured manners of little folks. For which reaſon, ſhe ſits in lonely ſtate, almoſt ſecluded from ſociety, becauſe there are very few people of her own rank to viſit her.

In religion ſhe is a great formaliſt, and thinks that true devotion conſiſts in mechanically reading a few prayers compoſed for ſuch and ſuch days.—She has extravagant ideas of her own piety, which no one elſe will allow her; for how can devout affections dwell in that heart, which is entirely under the influence of anceſtral

anceſtral vanity? True religion is beſt known by its humility; and is the only rod which can keep the pride of birth and the inſolence of riches in proper ſubjection.

This truly devout Lady, whoſe boſom, as I have heard, never yet glowed with the warm effuſions of benevolence, has turned the veſtry belonging to the church into a handſome well-furniſhed apartment, where ſhe, no doubt, expects that her pious orgies, emblazoned by coronets, will be diſtinguiſhed in their aſcent from thoſe of the vulgar peaſantry which compoſe a country congregation.

Her pride was much hurt when my father refuſed to partake of her devotional ſplendour, by ſeparating himſelf from the reſt of the flock, and, taking me with him, went into an old family pew, telling her, that perſon was moſt illuſtrious in the houſe of God, the fervency of whoſe prayer ſhould find acceptance with Him.

But for the native dignity of my father's manners, I know ſhe would conclude him of plebeian extraction; for his courteous behaviour gains him univerſal eſteem and reſpect: whilſt the Lady Eleanor, keeping up, as ſhe calls it, the dignity of the Engliſh nobility, by aſſuming an inſolent haughtineſs towards

her inferiors, meets from every individual nothing but ſilent contempt; the poor old ſoul little thinks that true nobility is beſt maintained by the ſplendour of noble actions.

My father has ruined you for ever in her opinion, by ſaying, if there were ever a human Being diveſted of worldly vanity, it was his daughter Emmeline.

She replied, ſhe hoped then her nephew would properly ſupport the dignity of his rank; as the conduct of his wife was of little importance in the world, provided ſhe brought him an heir to inherit the family titles and eſtates. You may tell him this, and let me know his opinion in your anſwer.

I have the vanity to tell you, I ſtand much higher in her good graces ſince my father informed her that my marriage was only deferred in compliment to her Ladyſhip; ſhe then moſt graciouſly condeſcended to ſay, ſhe could only return ſuch a compliment by exerting her utmoſt endeavours for a ſpeedy ſolemnization on the arrival of my dear Sir William Falkner. My father moſt heartily concurring with her ſentiments, all was buſtle and uproar on the appearance of the aforeſaid Sir William Falkner, who was no ſooner informed of the party

that

that was made in his favour, than forſooth, in a moment, every trait of the modeſt, humble, ſupplicating lover, was wiped out of his character; and he became poſitive, petulant, and perſevering. A letter which he has received from your good man has induced him to put on all theſe airs; wherein he tells him to aſſume at once the authority of a huſband, and not to be afraid ſtoutly to combat with a woman's perverſeneſs, as the beſt of them were not to be truſted with power: for even his Emmeline, as long as he continued an humble ſupplicating lover, treated him like a very Devil; yet he no ſooner began to aſſume the prerogative of a huſband, than ſhe became at once ſo ſubmiſſive—ſo affectionate—and ſo tender, that ſhe cheerfully fulfilled all the duties of a wife, though ſhe had behaved with the utmoſt tyranny as a miſtreſs. Nay, I am ſorry to add, that his whole letter breathed ſuch wicked advice, that Sir William's principles at once were tainted by them; and my father, who on all other occaſions is ſo good, preſcribed ſuch medicines as only tended to increaſe his diſorder; and poor I was made the ſacrifice which alone could remove the obſtinacy of his diſeaſe, by being led a

helpleſs victim to the altar; where the attending prieſt compelled me to ſwear eternal obedience to Sir William Falkner. However, to do him juſtice, my ſubmiſſion has given him no airs of ſelf-importance; but, by a generoſity not commonly found among his ſex, he endeavours to make it appear to the world that obedience becomes the part of the huſband;—when the wife governs with gentle ſway it ſhould become his glory to ſubmit to her dominion.

You can have no idea, Emmeline, of the many excellent virtues which form his heart; you have ſeen but little of him ſince his mind laboured under the heavy oppreſſion which reſulted from the recollection of his youthful follies.

I know not how it is, but Ormſley Caſtle wears a very different aſpect ſince his arrival; the ſun-beams appear more fervid, a ſtronger ray of light pervades theſe naturally-gloomy apartments; and the cawings of the rooks, which ſo lately ſeemed fit only to cheriſh melancholy, now paſs unheeded by me; and if I liſten to them when my dear Sir William is by, I fancy there is more muſic in their notes than in a grove of nightingales if he were abſent.

Be

Be ſure you don't ſhew this teſtimony of my weakneſs to your good man; for I find they are as arrant goſſips in their correſpondence to each other as any two miſſes could be; and I don't chuſe that our weakneſſes ſhould become ſubjects for their pens.

How has our good father, my dear Emmeline, plotted for us all! Now, had he taught theſe boys, on their firſt coming to Roſelands, the art of making *War*, inſtead of conniving at their art of making *Love*, his girls had eſcaped the ſnares of Hymen, and ſtill preſerved their free-agency.

You can't think how grieved my father is, to be thus long detained from his plaything, of which he ſeems as much enamoured as my brother; but he hopes to make ſuch an arrangement in his affairs before he ſees you, that he ſhall not be under the neceſſity of returning hither before next ſpring.

Is it true what my brother writes, that you are not well, that your cough and the pain in your ſide are returned again? If ſo, let me intreat you to quit the crowded aſſemblies of London for the more healthful retirement of Courtland Manor, where we hope ſoon to join you.—Pray tell my

brother, that with all his faults, there are very few of his ſex I love better.

Adieu, my dear ſiſter; and believe me, with the ſincereſt tenderneſs, your's moſt affectionately,

SOPHIA FALKNER.

LETTER XXXV.

Robert Langford, *Eſq.* *to Lord* Ormſley.

Dover.

THAT life, my dear Lord Ormſley, on which we ſet ſo little value while ſurrounded by the vigour of health and the glow of proſperity, yet becomes of ineſtimable value to him who feels, when too late, that he has raſhly curtailed it.

Such was poor Sir Charles Willoughby's condition;—the horrors of Death were aggravated to him by the dread conſciouſneſs that he himſelf had accelerated its approach. He prayed to the laſt for a prolongation of that exiſtence which he had madly thrown away, and died full of contrition for thoſe crimes which hurried him to an untimely grave.

As

As ſoon as I come to town I will inform your Lordſhip of further particulars; at preſent I feel myſelf quite incapacitated for writing, as death-bed ſcenes afford little ſatisfaction to the man of pleaſure. Adieu, my dear Lord: your's, &c.

R. LANGFORD.

LETTER XXXVI.

Lady Sophia Falkner *to Mrs.* Maitland.

Courtland Manor.

I DID not think, dear Madam, I ſhould have been near a month an inhabitant of this manſion, without once taking up my pen to enquire after your health; the only apology which can be admitted for my ſilence is, that my ſpirits have been ſo heavily oppreſſed on my dear ſiſter's account, that I would not give pain to your feelings by communicating the cauſe.

On our arrival we found her a ſad memento of the inſtability of human felicity. She looked very pale and very pretty, and her once elegant, but now emaciated form, bore a melancholy teſ-

timony that a conſuming fever had totally undermined the foundation of health; added to which, ſhe has a violent cough and conſtant pain in her ſide, whoſe united efforts, I fear, muſt ſoon rob my brother of every fond endearment in life. His looks already betray the anguiſh which clings to his heart.

After our firſt embraces were mutually exchanged, I was obliged to hurry out of the room to give vent to my tears, when my dear Sir William, ever attentive to my looks, and gueſſing by them at what paſſed in my mind, ſoon came in purſuit of me, and tenderly urged me to conceal my uneaſineſs, as it would only heighten the diſtreſs he ſaw my brother already felt.

After wiping my eyes, and drawing my hat over my face, to conceal the diſorder of my looks, we returned to the drawing-room, and I ſaid gaily, as I entered, to my brother, that he muſt excuſe my abſence, as I was deſirous of ſhewing my Sir William the great walnut-tree on the lawn, under which his eyes had ſo often made love to Emmeline, when her prudence had laid on him the heavieſt embargo which could be laid on a lover's lips—namely, ſilence.

Emme-

Emmeline ſmiled, which was more than her Lord could do, who hung over her with fond anxiety, as my father preſſed her to his heart. He ſtruggled hard to aſſume a cheerful countenance, while his boſom was torn with cruel anguiſh.

She held out her hand to Sir William, who moſt cordially preſſed it to his lips. "You ſee my Lord," addreſſing my father, "what a very faſhionable wife your Emmeline is already become, that ſhe does not bluſh to make advances to a gentleman even in the preſence of her huſband, nor to aſſure him that his viſit to Courtland Manor has made her happineſs perfect."

To which he gallantly replied, that ſuch a confeſſion was only wanted to complete his; and that he could with truth declare, he was not only the happieſt, but he feared alſo he ſhould become the vaineſt of men.

"No fear of that, my good friend," cried I, gently tapping him on the ſhoulder, "whilſt you have a monitor at hand, who will be conſtantly reminding you of your imperfections; and who, by a negligence of conduct, can ſoon reduce your boaſted happineſs to the moſt abject ſtate of matrimonial indifference."

People

People who lead a life of indifference," ſaid my father, "in the married ſtate, would be incapable of taſting a refined delight in any other. Moſt young people, now-a-days, come together from motives of intereſt, not eſteem: then poor Marriage has all the blame for not producing that tender ſenſibility which can exiſt only in ſuperior minds. And I believe, my children, you have already experienced, that when hearts are united by a virtuous affection, marriage only ſerves to ſtrengthen love, by correcting that tempeſt of the paſſions to which the lover is conſtantly expoſed while his hopes and fears are alternately preponderating."

"Pardon me," ſaid my brother; "but I do not find the tenderneſs of the huſband has at all corrected the impetuoſity of the lover; for there is no philoſophy can temporize with my feelings, while I ſit whole hours contemplating the pallid cheek of my ſweet love here, and ſtill find them as much a prey to inquietude, as when ſhe uſed to ramble the ſhades of Roſelands with this ſly Baronet of your's, ſiſter."

"You had always," ſaid I, "a moſt notable invention at creating imaginary ills."

"Would

"Would to Heaven," ſaid he, with a ſigh, "my dear Emmeline's illneſs were imaginary. I ſhould then be ſo happy, ſo very happy—" endeavouring to ſuppreſs a ſigh.

"Well then," ſaid ſhe, looking tenderly upon him, "you ſhall be happy; you ſee I am quite well now. The arrival of our dear friends, added to your tender care of me, have quite completed my cure." As ſhe pronounced the laſt ſentence, I ſaw ſhe breathed with difficulty, and, riſing, aſked if I would attend her to her dreſſing-room? Before ſhe reached it, I feared ſhe would have fainted.

Warren attended, who told me ſhe was frequently oppreſſed by theſe kind of languors, and recovered much ſooner when my brother was not preſent, whoſe extreme anxiety hurried her ſpirits beyond what her ſtrength was capable of bearing. —By leaving her quite alone, ſhe recovered, as Warren had predicted.

"There muſt be, my deareſt Sophy," ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe could ſpeak, "an alloy to our temporal ſatisfactions; but you muſt not weep for me; I cannot bear your tears; hide them from my beloved Ormſley, or you will make him very wretched. Conſider amidſt the thouſands

of

of miſeries with which Providence is pleaſed to afflict poor mortals, only ill health is given me. Think a moment how rich I am in every other good the world can give. My preſent complaint I look on as a bleſſing in diſguiſe, to wean my affections from earthly objects, to place them on things above. Did I ſuffer alone, I think I could embrace death without one ſigh at reſigning all the gay ſcenes of life. But when I ſee the ſuppreſſed anguiſh that rends my dear Lord's boſom, then, Sophy, comes the deadly pang which ſhakes my ſoul. He neither eats nor ſleeps. Now, good Heavens! if, by watching over my health, his own ſhould be endangered—I feel I want fortitude to ſupport the ſtroke;—but you muſt comfort him: tell him I am well, and that——"

"I muſt correct my ſweet wife," ſaid he, entering, "for attempting to corrupt the principles of my ſiſter. There is no language ſhe can employ can prove to me that ſhe is in health, while I ſee this weak decaying frame unable to ſupport itſelf."

"Pſha!" ſaid I, "the very braveſt of you men are the verieſt cowards in nature, if a favourite pet happens to be a little deranged. Sir William would break my heart

heart in a fortnight, if I were not very well, and he were to pine and fret over me as you do over Emmeline. Were I in her ſituation," continued I, "I ſhould ſoon die, to be thus deprived of breathing in the open air." The room felt very cloſe.

"Good God!" ſaid he, "why, I hav'n't ſuffered the air to blow upon her."

"Why, then," interrupted I, "depend upon it your worſt enemy could not have done her a greater miſchief. You are an attentive nurſe, brother, but a miſerable phyſician."

"Pardon me, my dear ſiſter," ſaid ſhe; "but were the tender aſſiduities of my kind nurſe here withdrawn," laying her hand on his arm, "it would not be in the power of the ableſt phyſician that ever lived to remove my complaint. What I believe now to be only a temporary malady, would then become a rooted diſeaſe."

He looked and ſpoke the fondeſt, tendereſt things, in return for her compliment.

The firſt opportunity I had of ſpeaking with Mrs. Warren alone, ſhe told me ſhe greatly rejoiced at our arrival, as ſhe feared if her Lord and Lady were much longer

longer left to themselves, they would absolutely be the death of each other; for whatever indisposition happened to either, it was so acutely felt by the other, that very often she had been puzzled to know which was the real invalid.

The third day after our arrival, my brother received a summons to attend a county meeting, in order to deliberate on some public grievances necessary to be laid before the Parliament, which he was about to decline attending, had not a certain pleader taken up the cause, who never pleads with him in vain.

"Consider, my dear Lord," said she, "what unworthy members of the creation we become when we live only to ourselves: think of the claims society has upon us, and let all self-interest give way before it, by giving your support to the business of to-morrow. Though it militates for a time against your present wishes, by calling you from home for a few hours, yet, by giving it your sanction, you may become a happy instrument in advancing the public good, besides enjoying the satisfaction of having done your duty. And it will also afford me a satisfaction of no common worth, that of welcoming to my heart, at your return,

return, the man whoſe conduct has gained him the applauſe of his conſtituents."

"That conſideration, my beſt life," ſaid he, preſſing her to his boſom, "has conquered all my ſcruples. But you muſt not do me the injuſtice to think, that any pleaſures ſhould have made me reluctant in the diſcharge of my duty, had not my ſweet Emmeline been at preſent the ſole object of my attention."

How delighted was my father to hear from his once libertine ſon, ſentiments which at once did honour to his head and heart.

I perſuaded him and Sir William to attend my brother, thinking that if his mind were amuſed from dwelling on the melancholy ſubject which ſat ſo near his heart, he would be better enabled to go through the buſineſs of the day.

After breakfaſt, they mounted their horſes; but my poor brother at ſetting out recommended his little girl, as he often calls her, ſo earneſtly to my care, that it greatly affected me. He told me he had ſtrange forebodings at his heart, that ſome criſis to her diſorder was approaching, for ſhe had had a worſe night than ſhe had known for many preceding ones, and that her looks were very much changed for the worſe.

I tried

I tried to ſmile away his fears; yet he had not been gone an hour before they were dreadfully realized. She fell into ſuch ſhivering fits, that I feared every moment would have been her laſt. Wild with apprehenſion, I knew not what to do. To ſend expreſs for my brother, I feared the alarm would prove fatal to him before he could reach home. Dr. Grantly alſo oppoſed ſending for him, as well as the ſweet ſufferer herſelf.

"Ah! my dear Sophia," ſaid ſhe, "if I am marked for death, let me conjure you, by all our paſt and preſent affection, let it not happen in the preſence of my dear Lord. You muſt promiſe me to comfort him, and tell him the hour is not very diſtant when we ſhall all meet again. Yes, we ſhall meet in that happy country, never to part again, where our happineſs ſhall be ſo perfect, that pain or diſeaſe can give it no alloy, and when once attained it will be eternal. The little lot of life allowed me here was ſo very perfect, had the enjoyment been longer granted me it might have relaxed my principles, and made me negligent of higher duties. But I ought to be thankful that conſtant pain has kept awake that reſignation to the divine will which is too apt to ſlumber when

when lulled to reſt by the drowſy opiates of unceaſing proſperity. Death would be welcome were it not aggravated with the thoughts of what I leave behind. Promiſe me then, my deareſt ſiſter, that you will be comforted. Our good father too—you muſt comfort him alſo; and when he has dropt the tear of parental affection over his Emmeline's grave, bid him raiſe his eyes to a ſublimer object, and tell him, comfort alone can come from that hand which, for wiſe purpoſes, is graciouſly pleaſed to afflict him. But my much-loved Henry—his impetuous temper I greatly fear will not be ſoothed by the conſolation of friends. He would not weep for me! No, nature would refuſe him the tender tribute of a tear to the memory of her he has ſo fondly loved. The fever in his brain would dry up every ſource of ſorrow within him, and prevent the powers of reaſon from operating on his mind: and though he would call, in the anguiſh of his ſpirit, on his Emmeline, yet ſhe could not hear his cry; for the lamentations of the wretched cannot pierce through the dark caverns of the tomb. I ſhall ſoon be nothing: alas, my heart is very cold——"

What

What followed I know not; my ſpirits failed me, and, by Dr. Grantly's order, I was carried by the ſervants into another room, where I was but juſt recovered when my brother, to my great ſurpriſe, entered it. The ſervants told him I had had a fainting fit, and was but juſt recovering. "But, good God," cried he, "why do you weep? and where is my Emmeline?" I could not ſpeak; I graſped his hand. This excited his apprehenſions; he looked on all ſides, as if expecting to ſee or hear ſomething terrible.

I begged him not to be alarmed, and aſked him what had brought him back ſo long before the hour he was expected?

"I have had a ſtrange foreboding at my heart," ſaid he, "ever ſince I left you; and the moment the buſineſs was over, I left my father and your Sir William to anſwer for me at dinner."

"Then you have not dined?" ſaid I, not knowing what to ſay.

"Dined!" ſaid he. "No, I could as ſoon think of flying as dining while my boſom harbours an anxiety about my dear Emmeline. But tell me how ſhe is." I burſt into tears. Dr. Grantly entered, being informed he was arrived.

"Dr.

"Dr. Grantly!" cried he, ſtarting; "and at this unuſual hour! Something dreadful muſt have happened; but tell me at once that my Emmeline lives, or diſtraction will ſeize on my brain."

"She does live, my Lord, then," returned he. "She has been much deranged, but is now better. Let me, however, entreat you to be calm when you ſee her; otherwiſe your anxiety may have more fatal effects on her mind than her preſent malady has upon her body."

I then ventured to tell him what had paſſed. He ſaid he was not ſurpriſed, for as he rode he had been arming his mind to meet ſomething dreadful. "But may I not ſee her, Doctor? for if ſhe muſt die, let her laſt breath be drawn from theſe arms."

He was going, ſcarcely knowing what he did, when Dr. Grantly detained him, ſaying he hoped there was no danger, though ſhe was really very ill, and that her recovery would very much depend upon his concealing from her the violence of his emotions.

He promiſed to be all tranquillity. We then followed the Doctor to her apartment. But my poor unfortunate brother had no ſooner preſſed the burning cheeks of his ſuffering Emmeline with his lips, than

than all the powers of his mind forſook him. He ſunk down quite ſpeechleſs and ſpiritleſs on the bed by her. Though her fever was very high, her recollection was very perfect, and the gentle ſoothings of her voice ſoon re-animated his ſenſes.

For many days and nights no entreaties could prevail upon him to quit her, as long as her life hung in ſuſpenſe. He became a real ſpectacle of grief; for neither my father nor I could offer him that conſolation of which we ſo much ſtood in need ourſelves. But why do I trouble you with a recital of ſorrows that I know will give ſuch exquiſite pain to your feelings? Suffice it to ſay, our hopes once more revive. Adieu, my dear Madam.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the ſame.

Courtland Manor.

WHEN the tide of happineſs ruſhes unexpectedly upon my boſom, it beats to communicate its feelings to her whom moſt it values.

Our

Our Emmeline, thank Heaven! is better. A violent cough is her worſt remaining ſymptom. From what painful ſolicitude has her returning health relieved my poor brother! We have been all under the moſt alarming apprehenſions for his health alſo. It muſt be very eloquent language to paint the leaſt idea of what he has ſuffered; but as ſoon as his Emmeline, on the ſubſiding of her delirium, began to be ſenſible of his unceaſing attentions, he revived hourly, and now ſeems as much compoſed as a man can be who has juſt paſſed from the extremes of miſery to the brighter ſcenes of ſubſtantial happineſs.

My father wiſhes Lady Ormſley to be removed to the Briſtol Wells, as ſoon as ſhe can bear the fatigue of travelling; yet he fears to mention them to my brother, leſt he ſhould hurry to a concluſion at once, and fancy ſhe was in a confirmed conſumption, as her father died there of that fatal diſorder.

But as women are ever more fertile in finding out expedients than men, I propoſed to my dear Sir William to go for a few weeks to the Wells, as drinking the waters would, in all probability, be the moſt efficacious means of removing a terrible cold and hoarſeneſs which have af-

flicted him for theſe laſt ten days. He, as well as my father, cheriſhed the hint, and then aſked my brother if he and Lady Ormſley would accompany us, as ſoon as the phyſician would give her leave to depart. This propoſal was perfectly agreeable to both, and, with Dr. Grantly's permiſſion, we ſhall ſet off in a few days.

I am not ſorry that neither Sir George Warren or Mr. Clarkſon are in the country, for reaſons you will eaſily gueſs. The ſiſter of the former viſits us frequently, and is as lively and good-humoured as ever.

My brother, on his wife's recovery, has diveſted her of all power in his houſe, except that which ſhe holds over his affection, and has appointed me to the ſupreme command, leſt her ſolicitude for the accommodation of her friends ſhould retard her recovery. I always take my ſeat at the head of his table, as I uſed to do before he was married, while he places his wife next himſelf, to whom he devotes all his attention; and though ſhe has no appetite, yet, in complaiſance to his wiſhes, ſhe frequently makes efforts which her ſtrength is very inadequate to perform. He generally drives her a ſhort airing every day round the park; but for the

the world, my father excepted, he would not truſt the care of her to any hands but his own.

I find that on his marriage he ordered his ſteward to make a ſmall donation to all the poor on his eſtates, in proportion to their families. This intelligence when communicated to Lady Ormſley afforded her the higheſt ſatisfaction. She ſent alſo private orders to the ſteward, that they ſhould be clothed as well as fed, and the expence, unknown to my brother, ſhould be defrayed out of her own purſe.

As we were at church on Sunday, for the firſt time ſince our coming hither, my father and Sir William obſerved to me, what a pleaſant ſight it was to ſee ſo many indigent well-dreſſed people, to the number of about one hundred and fifty, attending divine worſhip; when the clergyman told us, that but for the benevolence of Lady Ormſley they had been, through extreme poverty and nakedneſs, denied the privilege of attending the houſe of God: that ſhe had not only furniſhed the poor with clothing, but had ordered ſuch books of pious inſtruction to be delivered amongſt them as were moſt likely to improve their morals, by ſhewing them the danger of vice; and rewards were annually to be given to

thoſe who never abſented themſelves from the ſervice of the church, unleſs they could ſhew ſufficient cauſe for it.

On our return home, we told my brother we had juſt detected his wife in ſuch proceedings as would inevitably ſubject him to the ridicule of all his faſhionable acquaintance.

"As long as I poſſeſs her dear heart, ſiſter," ſaid he, laying down a book he had been reading to her, "I care not what cenſures the votaries of pleaſure may paſs on her conduct, becauſe ſhe poſſeſſes a mind adorned with a thouſand virtues and graces they never will be able to boaſt of; and I hope," tapping her cheek, "ſhe will ſoon regain that richneſs of beauty for which ſhe has been ſo long admired, and which the vaineſt of them would be proud to enjoy."

She coloured exceſſively. "Nay, don't bluſh my love," ſaid my father, kiſſing her hand; "for though our accuſation againſt you is of a very ſingular nature, yet I more than half ſuſpect your lord and maſter here will pardon it, in conſequence of its ſingularity." He then told him what we had heard of his wife when at church.

"Thoſe charges againſt my Emmeline," ſaid he, "are at length become

familiar to my ear. O congratulate me, my deareſt friends," continued he, "that my fond arms encircle the fountain of true benevolence," holding her to his heart; "and with ſuch a treaſure I can boaſt I am not only the richeſt, but the happieſt of men alſo."

"I will not be praiſed, my Lord," returned ſhe, "for doing what a thouſand others would have done with my opportunities. Moſt people are affluent who have few vices to maintain. In the articles of dreſs, my Lord, you have been ſo very liberal to me, that you have left even vanity nothing to ſigh for, had finery been my paſſion. Not only you, but my dear Lord Courtland alſo, was conſtantly making me preſents of money, for which I had little call. I don't much love public places, and I could not play at cards. What uſe had I then for that wealth which was conſtantly flowing in upon me? When luckily it occurred to me that a few naked villagers might be clothed, at a much leſs expence than I could entertain our faſhionable acquaintance with cards and muſic on a Sunday evening. Beſides, there would not be any duty violated, or commandment broken. —But I hope you won't be angry with me, my Lord?"

"Yes, pride of my ſoul," ſaid he, "I am angry with you, that you ſhould conceal a virtue in your boſom to which I am a ſtranger." Every eye preſent gliſtened with delight, but, being a woman, mine were privileged to overflow. How ſudden the tranſition is from the heart to the eyes, when gentle Pity touches the ſprings of humanity!

Adieu, dear Madam.

S. FALKNER.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Lady Auguſta Finleigh *to Miſs* Herbert.

Briſtol Wells.

O Maria, to what vile humiliations does the commiſſion of baſe actions ſubject the haughtieſt minds! To what abject ſhame has the detection of mine expoſed my proud and unſubdued ſpirit! All my artifices are at length laid open to the broad eye of public obſervation, and, mortifying thought! at this inſtant affords a rich ſupply of tattle at every tea-table. Alas! the evils I have ſo long meditated againſt others at length recoil

recoil on myſelf, and have pierced my heart with the deepeſt ſhame, while thoſe very beings I would have ſacrificed to my vengeance enjoy that rich reward of love and peace which only can reſult from conſcious rectitude.

You will not be ſurpriſed that I protracted my ſtay here, ſince it was to ſecure a conqueſt worthy of all my ambition. I no ſooner began to perceive Sir George Clifford's growing attachment to me, than I flirted with every pretty fellow that preſented himſelf, in order to heighten Sir George's tenderneſs by alarming his jealouſy; and when I ſaw him ſeriouſly hurt by my conduct, I played the part of the Fair Penitent with ſuch infinite pathos, that I rivetted his chains more cloſely than ever. I never did or can love any man but Lord Ormſley; yet, as it is neceſſary for family convenience that I ſhould marry a man of large fortune, ſuch another offer as Clifford might never preſent itſelf; I therefore ardently hoped an union might take place between us before my fracas with Lord Ormſley could reach his ears, as he is but lately returned from his travels, and ſincerely believed my mind was as artleſs as he had often ſaid my face was faultleſs.

As I was perpetually ſurrounded with company, he anxiouſly requeſted me to grant him an hour's audience when the buſy world ſhould be excluded. I played upon his paſſions for ſome time, in order to kindle the ardour of his impatience, before I would ſeemingly condeſcend to appoint an interview with him, for which however I was dying to have him ſolicit.

At the public breakfaſt I conſented, with well-feigned reluctance, to receive him in the evening. Tranſported at his good fortune, he preſſed me to walk with him. When breakfaſt was over, we ſtrolled together toward the Well-houſe. Having reached a covered ſeat near the door, he prevailed on me to ſit down, and continued to entertain me in a ſtyle of gallant tenderneſs, which, though my heart was unintereſted, I found greatly flattered my pride; when, on a ſudden, my attention reverted to a new object that opened every ſource of tenderneſs in my ſoul. It was Lord Ormſley walking by the ſide of his wife's chair, whoſe faded cheeks and ſunk eyes ſeemed to indicate that ſhe would ſoon ceaſe to be an inhabitant of this world.

Clifford diſcovered the diſorder of my mind, and, concluding it proceeded from illneſs,

illneſs, became tenderly anxious about me. I only ſaid I was a little faint, but the air would ſoon recover me.

Lady Ormſley's chair ſtopped very near us, and the ſervant was lifting up the head for her to get out, when her Lord, after looking about, gently laid his hand on her's, begged ſhe would keep her ſeat, for he did not like the ſtate of the air, the wind being at north-eaſt (not that I could find a breath ſtirring), and then ordered the ſervant to fetch a glaſs of water. I could not hear her anſwers to the anxious inquiries he made after her health, while his eyes, beaming with ſenſibility, were fondly fixed on her face.

This attention from a man of faſhion toward his wife, ſoon drew upon him the general obſervation of all the company who happened to be on the walks, but at which he found himſelf no more embarraſſed than a modern wife would be, to be detected by her huſband in a tête-à-tête with her gallant.

I was fanning myſelf with great vehemence, affecting to be overcome with the heat, in order to conceal the perturbation of my mind; when my evil genius, in the perſon of Lord Layton, accoſted me, "Come, come, Lady Auguſta," obſerving

ſerving I looked pale, "I don't wonder that you ſhould be a little ſick to ſee your old lover Lord Ormſley exhauſt his tenderneſs on a woman to whom you have always borne a mortal hatred; and by my faith it is a fact, that I am as much in love with the wife, as your Ladyſhip can be with the huſband." Clifford ſtared; my cheeks glowed. "And," continued his Lordſhip, "Ormſley is the moſt generous fellow breathing; for he is ſo delighted with my paſſion for his wife, that he has given me an invitation to ſpend a month with him, and for a very ſingular motive too, I aſſure you; for when I paid my addreſſes to his wife, and was rejected by her in conſequence of her engagement to him, I at once reſigned all hope, and determined to rejoice in the happineſs of a woman, though I was not the object deſtined to procure it for her. Now had a certain lady acted as diſintereſtedly by Lord Ormſley as I did by his wife, the pretty pale-faced dear, there, would not have been brought to the brink of the grave by the wicked inventions of a female Machiavel; but adieu;" bowing, "I have not ſaid one gallant thing to Lady Ormſley to-day." He left me, and accoſted her Lord, who bowed very low on ſeeing me, but ſpoke not; ſeeming at the ſame time

deſirous

deſirous of concealing me from the eyes of his wife. Clifford now appeared to be quite *au fait* at the cauſe of my emotion; and with a cold politeneſs, as I looked not well, propoſed his attending me to my lodgings. On my arrival he left me immediately; and no ſooner was I alone, than I gave a looſe to the bittereſt ſorrow that could reſult from love, hatred, ſhame, and indignation; for I doubted not but that my late conduct towards Lord Ormſley would now become the general topic of converſation.

As the hour approached in which I was to receive Clifford, I thought it moſt prudent to dry my tears, and repair to my toilet, and by applying an unuſual quantity of rouge to my cheeks, to kindle up ſomething like vivacity in my countenance, to which the adventures of the day had been very hoſtile; but the climax of my mortifications was yet to come.—As I ſat, dreſſed out with every blandiſhment that Faſhion could inſpire, or Art invent, waiting Clifford's arrival, inſtead of his perſonal appearance, I received only the following note.

MADAM, Granby Houſe, July 17, 17—

"BELIEVE me, I leave the Wells this evening under the extremeſt regret, to be obliged to forego thoſe ſentiments of a lady

lady whom I began fondly to imagine Heaven had deſtined to make the happineſs of my future life.

"I confeſs, a ſudden ebullition of paſſion, Madam, may betray the mind to commit an indiſcretion at which it would revolt when the tide of anger begins to ebb; but a calm and deliberate revenge proves the ſoul ſuſceptible of the blackeſt malignity. And believe me, the tender paſſion can never find an entrance to that boſom where baneful Envy has fixed its reſidence.

"'Tis with regret I confeſs that I have been cruelly deceived; I have doated on a fair face, without once ſuſpecting it contained a mind capable of wounding the generous breaſt in the tendereſt part.

"I find there is a ſhocking ſtory here prevalent in every mouth, though I alone was a ſtranger to it till this very day; of a lady who conceived an unfortunate attachment to Lord Ormſley, but being diſappointed in her wiſhes, ſhe conceived a diabolical plot, by attempting to deſtroy his happineſs for ever with a woman every way worthy of his affection; by planting the ſeeds of jealouſy between them, which had nearly brought her to the grave, and him to diſtraction.

"Should your ladyſhip, in your viſiting rounds, chance to meet with the lady whom

whom the above deſcription will ſuit, do me the favour to tell her, that it is with infinite regret I quit for ever the ſociety of a woman whoſe beauty firſt made me her captive, but whoſe want of principle has ſet my affections once more at liberty. I am, Madam, with great reſpect, your Ladyſhip's moſt obedient humble ſervant,

GEORGE CLIFFORD."

To what ſociety ſhall I fly, Maria, which will not ſtigmatize my name with infamy? I am all paſſion—all rage; and know not where to go for conſolation. I will fly from hence immediately, and try to prevail on my father to grant me permiſſion to join my brother on the continent; there faſhion gives ſanction to levity; and my rank will procure me admirers, if my conduct does not procure me friends.——Adieu.

A. F.

LETTER XXXIX.

Lady Ormſley *to Mrs.* Aylbert.

DEAR MADAM, Roſelands.

WITH returning health, my dear Lord has reſtored to me the uſe of pen and ink, having firſt engaged me to promiſe him to uſe them diſcretionally. Can I refuſe compliance with *his* wiſhes, whoſe ſole delight it is to gratify *mine?*

My happineſs is ſo very perfect, that I feel my mind frequently oppreſſed at the ſtrong ſenſe I have of my own imperfections; knowing I have done nothing to deſerve ſuch diſtinguiſhed mercies as thoſe which have lately befallen me. It ſhall therefore be my conſtant prayer to Heaven, to guard the frailty of my nature from being led aſtray by the tempting ſeductions of pleaſure, and that Heaven will be graciouſly pleaſed to impreſs my mind with a deep ſenſe of its unworthineſs; ſo that my ſpirit being daily clothed with the garb of Humility, Proſperity ſhall not enſnare my ſoul ſo as to make it neglect fulfilling the duties of a Chriſtian.

Sir William Falkner and his Lady, though their chief reſidence is with Doctor Patterſon, yet by day we are all united

as

as one family. Lord Courtland declares himſelf the moſt bleſt of fathers to behold his children thus happy around him. I ſee the tear of grateful joy often ruſhing into his eye as he obſerves the change of heart in his once truant ſon, that he is happily ſnatched from a life of diſſipation and folly, in the very prime and vigour of life, to the full exertion of thoſe virtues, which at length have made him beloved—revered—and honoured.

Yes, Madam, with pride and exultation of heart, I confeſs it, that my beſt, my deareſt Lord Ormſley with pleaſure acknowledges, he has more ſatisfaction in ſtudying the art of gardening, under his wife, than ever he experienced attending the levee of the moſt finiſhed beauties, or amidſt the moſt joyous ſpirits that ever circulated the glaſs of intemperance in a tavern.

I hear a voice impatiently aſking for me. "Coming, my dear Lord, coming—" Happy is that wife whoſe huſband's commands become her choiceſt pleaſure.—Again he aſks for me.—Adieu, my dear Madam, adieu! your's moſt affectionately.

E. ORMSLEY.

THE END.